

University of Cape Town



# **Mountain and Ski Club**



**2001 Journal**

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## **MOUNTAIN AND SKI CLUB: STUDENTS WITH ALTITUDE.**

Reading through past journals, I have realised that being in the mountains is like traversing across a huge time line: the path is there, everyone has their place, there has been someone before you, and in the future, there will be many more following. This thought can be verified when hiking in places like the Cederberg, Oorlogskloof, where one is reminded of the San and Khoi-khoi herders living there so many years ago. The handprints and paintings left behind by the San in caves and rocky outcrops are a reminder of how history can be found anywhere - in even the most seemingly unpopulated and remote areas. The rock paintings in Oorlogskloof left an immense impression and enhanced tremendous respect for the land and the people it has harboured in the past, present and if all goes well, in the future.

Like those rock paintings, I feel that photography as art and documentary enhances and provokes our memories. People remember images far better than words, which is another reason why I have chosen photography ahead of written articles for this year's journal. The outcome I hope will represent the awesome experiences all the MSC members have had on our club trips this year. Having the opportunity to switch off the computer, put studies on the bookshelf and run wild in the mountains for a few days is a physical and mental necessary for me. It is great to be reminded of your mortality and human-ness through mud-crusted legs, odour au Natural, and physical exhaustion with full-on immersion into nature as it should be:

wild and untamed by man.

This journal has been inspired by all of you who get out and enjoy our natural beauty and the many friends I have met and made over the past two years as a member of the Mountain and Ski club.

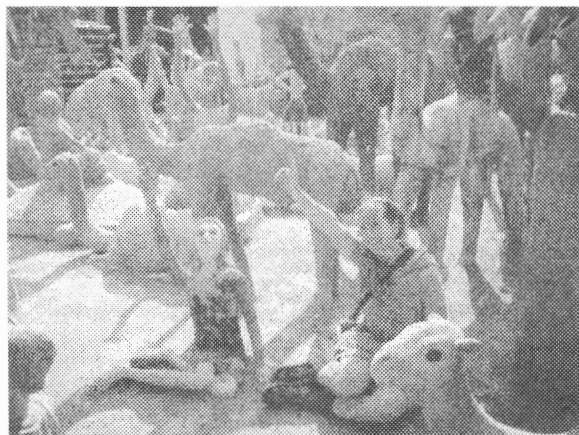
Thanks to everyone who contributed photos, articles and cartoons. Thanks to all who endured my nagging throughout! Thanks to the 2000 editor Ruth Woudstra for being so full of energy and inspiration, my co-editor, public relations officer and personal slave Jacek Stankiewicz, Ben Knights for your invaluable advice, but a very huge Thank you to all of you who make the club active, sociable, energetic and exciting.

The beautiful photographs of landscapes, incredible sunsets and our members doing nutty things will hopefully show how much of a tremendously beautiful country we are lucky to have so close to UCT. And for all those members who could not or would not participate in our hikes and climbs this year read and weep!

Good-luck to 2002 editor: Julia Wakeling. To our new and old members, I hope the New Year brings lots of new and fun experiences.

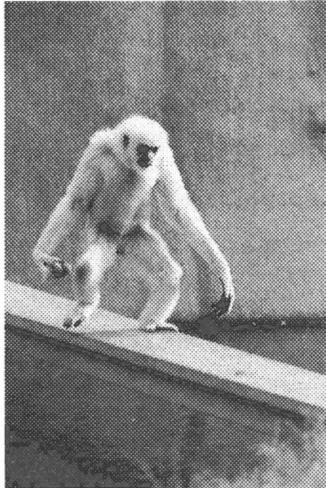
May the mountains be with you.

Samantha Becker, editor 2001.



## TREASURER'S REPORT

The UCT Mountain and Ski Club received about R42000 from the subscription of its 699 members this year. In addition to this amount, UCT gave the club a R3000 grant towards administrative costs and a R3500 grant towards journal editing.



Major social events such as the 'Cheese and Wine', as well as the 'Film Festival' did not result in significant losses because the entrance fees charged covers most of the expenses.

About R1600 was spent on renovations to the

Skilift on Waaihoek. Other significant expenses include the purchase of new equipment (R2600), development of new climbing areas (R1500), subsidies (R3000) and the maintenance of assets (R1400).

The Witels account, which is also managed by the club, is self-sufficient as conservation meet and maintenance expenses are paid for from the trail earnings. A total of R4360 was spent on transportation subsidies for conservation meets this year.

Remaining club funds will also be used to help launch the 'Expedition Fund' in the following year.

Mattieu de Villiers  
UCTMSC Treasurer 2001

## ZUURBERG REPORT

This year has been an active one, especially for Zuurberg. To begin with, the opening of the Witels season, as per usual was a roaring success and hugely popular as seen by the full bookings. There is however one concern, the ever-increasing signs of human impact in the form of refuse at camp-sites. Also a number of policing parties were run, with even three trespassing

parties being found and escorted off the property. This reinforces the need for policing trips. Some updates were performed on the booking program used for the Witels. These are hoped to ensure that the river does not get overbooked thereby keeping the human impact on the Kloof to a minimum.

Next provision was made in the Vredehoek servitude agreement, for a New Base Hut. The area has been staked out and exists as a potential project for the future. For those who don't know, Vredehoek is the neighboring property we cross when going to Hoare Hut. Also it should be noted that the current site does not lie on our friend Rob Meyer's land. Bringing me to my next point the Meyer Saga continues, with no prospects of out-of-court settling in sight. There have however been no confrontations and our lawyers correspond.

Some of you may recall that the road to the Hoare Hut parking lot, has at times been interesting to negotiate, especially the dreaded bridge! Early this year, that problem was remedied and in a number of meetings, the design redone and the bridge given a substantial face-lift. However, this year's copious winter downpours have caused a section of the road to be badly eroded. That problem is being seen to as we speak. In the first quarter, one of the Farms comprising Vredehoek changed ownership and relationships with the new farmer, as with the rest of our neighbors, are good.

This year has seen much happen in the way of Skiing and snow. Kilian Hagemann finally got the ski-lift running. New base stations were made, courtesy of the UCT Mechanical Engineering Department and many weekends were spent setting all this up.

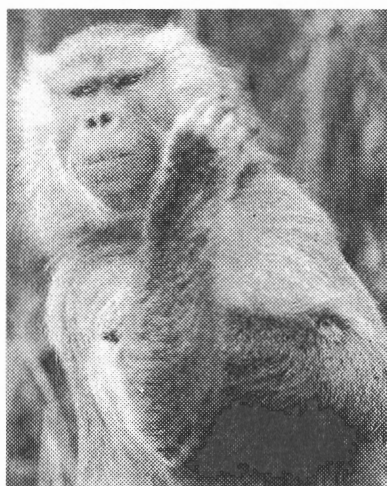
It has also been rediscovered that there are in fact a couple of cave-systems on our very own Zuurberg. They were discovered several years ago, mapped and then promptly forgotten about! This year Kevin Iles discovered a cryptic reference to them and has brought them to light as it were.

On the Conservation front, we have kept our involvement in CNC-initiated talks in Ceres about a Mega-reserve that is to span from the Hex River Mountains to the Cedar Berg! Wow! This will not mean that we loose Zuurberg, in fact we are a key player in the Hex River Mountains, as Zuurberg remains one of few



untouched Fynbos Watercatchment Areas. Anthony Kasula has done vast amounts to maintain the status of the land by leading work parties on most weekends to clear out alien vegetation. Furthermore he has compiled and submitted an application for Zuurberg to be declared a National Heritage Site. Numerous path-building meets have also happened and there are plans for a longdrop at the Alder Ring (unfortunate pun).

With the next Spring and Summer seasons, I would like to encourage more of you to take advantage of this unique example of Fynbos Mountain land and go out and explore the peaks and the surrounding mountains. Zuurberg offers the ideal setting. Also I would like to encourage people to take an active part in



conserving the land that we gain so much pleasure and happiness from.

Wolraad Euvrard  
Zuurberg  
Convener  
2001

## HIKES REPORT, OR A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF THE HIKES CONVENER

**Monday 05:45 am** Radio switches on with "skinner nuus", enough to drive anyone out of bed. Get up, run, shower, dress, brush teeth, eat breakfast, pack bag, leave for varsity. **07:00 am** In the car driving to varsity, going through the options, Gilman no, Nigel Pierce no, Cape Talk no. Eventually the Cape Town traffic report and the weather update. Looking good for this weekend's hikes. **08:00 am - 12:45 pm** Classes, yawn! **13:00 pm** Dash up to Upper Campus for a meeting with the subcom in the club. Earnest planning of the next term's calendar takes place followed by discussions on how to improve hike attendance and increase

our leader pool. Within thirty minutes we're onto the serious stuff, "What are you doing this vac?" "Which trip are you doing this weekend?" "Anyone keen for sundowners?" "Any more money in the budget for another round?" **14:00pm** Clear mail from pigeonhole, two permits, three unpaid permits, minutes from Ailsa, 1 map, and 4 pieces of bogus propaganda. **14:05pm** Go to Sport's Admin and give them faxes to send, earnest promises that they'll be sent right away. Make calls to book the vac trips we've just planned. Arguments over dates and prices, "No, that's students not children.... Oh well if children are cheaper then we're all children... Adult supervision? Well we're really mature children." Or "The long weekend in August... that's right... Yes for 10 people... Both days... Okay so that's Friday 20 through to Monday 23?... What?... No lady 2001 not 2002!" **14:30pm** Go to noticeboard to clear off all the old notices and collect random scrappy pieces of paper with my name on. Notice no notices for this weekend's trips. Mental note #1 phone leaders. Attempt to return to middle campus but get caught by the abundance of MSC members on Jammie stairs with nothing better to do. **15:20pm** Eventually succeed in getting back to Middle Campus. Photocopy maps and RDs for next week's hike leaders. Type up next term's calendar and mass mail to my list of leaders. Check out the weather satellite. Clear six messages off my cell phone all from CNC looking for money. **15:45pm** Go in search of the cheque that the university began writing out two months ago. Locate cheque on treasurer's desk. Pay in large sum of cash from last vac trip and find we're R6000 over budget, none of the other leaders have paid. Mental note #2 phone damn leaders! **16:30pm** Back in the Law Building and making a really conscientious effort at doing academic work. **18:00pm** Leave the library in search of supper. **19:00pm** NCR for the Committee meeting, report back on what Hikes is up to. Discussion of the new calendar, new leadership incentive schemes, expedition fund plans and the ongoing worry of leader liability. **22:00pm** Finally at home, catch the last half hour of Ally McBeal, eat, sleep.

**Tuesday 05:45am** "Skinner nuus" fails to drive

me from my bed. Pretend to run, brush my teeth in the shower and skip breakfast. **07:15am** Running late for varsity, traffic report not good and weather report wrong. Turn it off and glare at the other drivers instead. **08:15am-13:00pm** Late, but present. Everybody else bright and breezy. "How you doing Kev? You're looking tired." "@#\$%%" **13:10pm** Head for Upper Campus. Kili sitting on the steps as usual. Stick maps and RDs on board, weekend notices still not up, refresh mental note #1. Go down to Sports Admin, faxes still not sent. Phone CNC and tell them the cheque's in the mail. Attempt to make it back to Middle Campus but meet Dave A. One hour and a lengthy technical route detail discussion for a trip next term later I'm on my way back down. **14:45pm** Pass Kili on the stairs. **14:55pm-16:00pm** Sit in the law cafeteria and imagine life as an apathetic uninvolved student. **16:00pm** Three coffees and a muffin later I'm in the library reading cases. **17:30pm** Back on Upper Campus at the Info centre packing 6 Com members into Sweetness for the journey to Hatfield Street for our meeting with the MCSA. **20:00pm** Back home. Phone the leaders, yes they'll put their posters up tomorrow. Phone the other leaders, yes they'll pay. Phone the weekend trip leader and discuss weather conditions and route details. Field calls from eager beaver members about trips still waaay in the future. **21:00pm** Mail report back forms to last week's leaders and check on the other now overdue messages. **22:30pm** In bed.

**Wednesday 05:45pm** Ready to kill the "skinner nuus" guy. Swim, shower, change, eat, leave. **07:00pm** On time today. Listen to Fine Music radio to prove to myself that I'm really doing okay. **08:00pm-13:00am** In class, man I hate varsity. **13:00pm-14:00pm** Lunch ruined by the realisation that I have a tut I haven't prepared for. **14:00pm-15:00pm** Tut **15:15pm** Clear messages off my phone, two from CNC asking when we'll pay them, "Sheesh, enough already!" and two from hike leaders who can't lead their weekend trips. Find the Monday paper, now old, and see that the MSC article has been published. Find the varsity and see they've slandered the club again. Mental note #3 write response. **16:00pm**

Home early. Series of rapid calls to the subcom and various others to secure leaders for this weekend. Sort out Sunday's trip and I take Saturday's trip convinced from the weather satellite that it will rain. Try and convince the person running for my portfolio that they really should take over now to try and get experience.

**Thursday** Uneventful. Email broken and no-one phones and I'm glad.

**Friday 05:45pm** Woken up to a Rachmaninoff concerto, much better! **07:45pm** Made it to varsity early for the first time this week. Time for coffee and breakfast in the cafeteria.

**08:00pm -**

**13:00am:**

Classes, whatever.

**13:00pm**

Dash up to

Upper

Campus for

pre-hike

meeting.

**14:00pm**

Back in the

Law library.

No response

to the report

back forms,

send more

email. No

leaders for

next term yet, make mental note to phone

leaders. Bookings not completely done yet and

still waiting on some permits, make another

mental note to get hold of CNC, a thought

which fills me with fear. **16:30pm** Work sort of

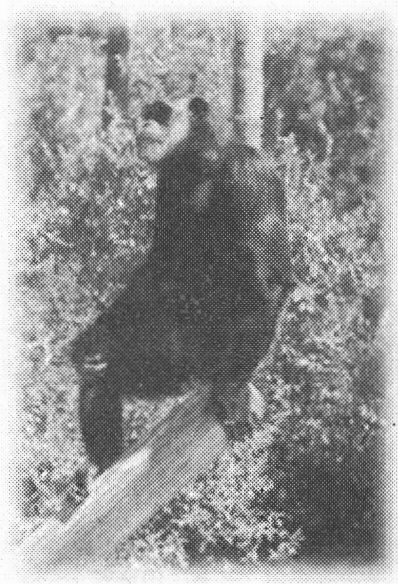
done. Head up Devil's Peak for sundowners.

**19:30** Home at last. Open phone bill and smile

when I think of the Treasurer's face when he

gets it.

**Saturday** A bright sunny day and I'm at the info centre traditionally late to lead the trip. Beam at the eager hikers as I tell them I've never done the trip before but don't worry, I remember looking at the map (last week at a great distance in a committee meeting). Besides, the leader explained it all to me on the phone last night. You just walk to the tree and then turn at the





rock and look for the grassy patch. Less than an hour later we're in the mountains and I'm remembering what makes this such a great job and such a great club. Soon I'm even telling myself that maybe I should run for the Com again, and then I know MSC is in your blood. Even when I've graduated and gone (hopefully by the time I'm thirty) I'll still wish I was back in the MSC.

Kevin Iles  
Hikes Convener 2001

## SOCIALS REPORT

Once again the socials year has been a very busy one. The highlight of the first term, the Cheese and Wine, turned out to be an enormous success, with a record number of people attending. The Tennis Club provided a splendid venue, as usual, and the wine, food, loads of festive MSC members and (almost too warm) weather provided the awesome atmosphere. If you missed it this year (shame on you), don't make the same mistake next year. The rest of the term saw Jayson Orton and the trio of Brett Hochfeld, Gordon Forbes and Mattieu De Villiers taking us through some awesome climbing slides, as well as a very nice jaunt up Lion's Head for sundowners.

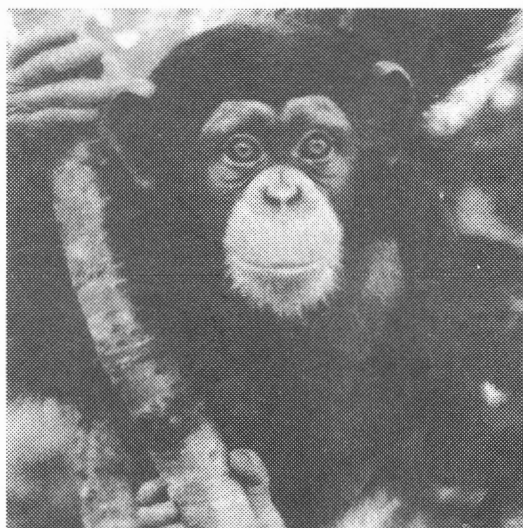
In the second term we tried something new. Instead of the Barn Dance that had become far too expensive, we hosted a Mountain Film Festival at MCSA's clubhouse in Hatfield Street. Two films by Nic Good were shown ('Oceans of Fear' and 'St. Valentin') as well as a Bouldering on Campus video made by Gordon Forbes, our budding film director. It was a really nice evening that I hope will become a tradition. The 30th Hoare Hutt Birthday Party was the highlight of the Second term and was a roaring success. We had loads of old and new club members (including many original Hutt builders) trekking up the mountain for a splendid meal and some reminiscing. We also went virtual White Water Kayaking with Ross McDonald and climbing Mt. Kenya with Arvind Varsani.

In the third term Arvind once again took us

through his travels, this time to the USA where he had just been winter mountaineering. Brett Hochfeld showed us his slides of climbing in Australia and then the Brett, Gordon, Mattieu and Craig Reid took us through their trip to Thailand. Ant Kaschula took us to Namibia and Tracy De Villiers took us to the Annapurna Sanctuary. The highlight of the third term was the annual Cocktail Party. The theme this year was 'The Lord of the Rings', and it was the usual rage.

The Wednesday socials are a great way to meet people in the club, see where they've been and find out what exciting things we get up to.

Thanks guys for a fantastic social year!



Christina Jongens  
Socials Convener 2001

## CONSERVATION REPORT

Looking back this year, it would seem that there has been a strong conservation drive. One of the main achievements has been the long outstanding initiative to have Zuurberg declared a Natural Heritage site culminating in the eventual completion and submission of the necessary documentation to WCNCB and DEAT. The vision to have this done was conceptualised over seven years ago and as with many great ideas, unless action is taken it will always just remain a great idea. After several months of meetings, phone calls, emailing etc. the forms were submitted in June

and presently we are expecting the longwinded bureaucratic process to come through any minute. In the years of waiting because Natural Heritage Site status affords little in terms of conservation clout, on recommendation from various authorities we have been advised that Private Nature Reserve status would be the next best option for ensuring Zuurberg's future as a Wilderness area. As a core property in the Hex River Mountains, linking two State Forests and the Ceres Local Authority Reserve, raising Zuurberg to the status of a Private Nature Reserve would result in a total conserved area of over 29 000ha. In both of the above issues sincere thanks must be given to Barrie Lowe (Coastec Environmental Consultants), Peter Viljoen (Waterval area manager, WCNCB) and the Natural Heritage Site Sub-committee: Richard Kahle, Gav Greenwood, Nick Croukamp, Kevin Isles, Dave Acott and Wolraad Euvraad for their help in compiling the documentation.

As far as pine hacks and path-building meets are concerned, we have had a total of 9 conservation meets this year: 7 being on Zuurberg. One of the external meets was a joint MCSA/MSc meet on Skoorsteenskop. In one day we removed 22 000 pine seedlings and chain sawed out 1030 large pines. The second external meet was a joint MSc/Friends of Betty's Bay hack out at Betty's Bay where we help the local community to clear invasive rooikrans off the surrounding sand dunes.

Zuurberg has remained as one of the most pristine wilderness areas in the Western Cape! Ongoing work on the Adderley street emergency exit path has continued and a new access restricting sign has been erected at St. dam. To solve the abluting problems at Alder ring campsite a simple facility has been erected. A Black Eagle nesting site has been found and monitored from time to time & various pine hacks have helped in the hope of the eventual elimination of pines from the property.

Numerous exciting initiatives for next year have been planned and include:

- Gathering of baseline vegetation data.
- Surveying the Witels for endangered indigenous fish species.
- Integrating an Environmental Consultant or similar NGO to help manage the property.
- Formulating a management plan for the

property.

- GIS mapping of Zuurberg, showing access routes, huts, places of interest etc.
- Bird and flower books for Hoare Hut.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all those people who have participated on any of the



conservation meets. I think I can safely guarantee that every person who has come back from a conservation meet thoroughly enjoyed it. In all it's been a very productive year for conservation in the club, and hopes that next year's ready for what's coming!

Ant Kaschula

Conservation Officer

## MSC WEBSITE

2001 saw a major breakthrough in the Club's website: at the 2000 AGM a new portfolio, I.T. Convener, was established. Michael Marconi was elected to fill the post. He produced an awesome website, including weekly updates of activities, tons of pictures and other funky stuff. Check it out at [sportsclubs.uct.ac.za/mountain](http://sportsclubs.uct.ac.za/mountain).

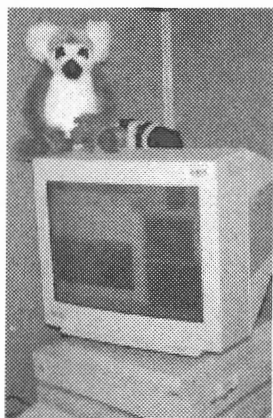
This is what Mike had to say:

There are striking parallels between web site design and mountain climbing. Before you see the mountain, the whole endeavour seems like a great idea. When you reach the base and stare open-mouthed at the summit, that sentiment begins to change. You are a mountain climber however and no mere chunk of rock will keep you down. So you begin the slog up to the top. This part seems interminable and you ask yourself why exactly you enjoy this. Eventually, you reach the top and turn around to see what you have accomplished. You remind yourself that this is why you push yourself.

Now, substitute the Game' for coffee, switch the chunk of rock for screens of code and you have web design. Many bleary-eyed hours later, I can proudly present you with our new club portal. It's equally as great a feeling to look at this completed project as it is staring across a sweeping mountain range!

Henry Voge said: "The mountains will always





be there; the trick is to make sure that you are too."

With this thought in mind, I have done my utmost to bring you a nexus that is both easy to use and highly informative. It is my hope that this site will facilitate your outdoor experiences.

I hope you have as much fun utilising the site as I have had in creating it.

Now go find yourself a mountain to climb!

Michael Marconi  
Editor and I.T Convenor

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Mountain and Ski Club: a physical and emotional entity has different meanings to many people and has been for years. There are many beautiful people who belong to the extraordinary family of mountaineers affectionately known as the legendary MSC! As with my family, the club is a resting place for my heart and soul, a place where many of my closest relationships have grown. I praise the love and the spirit of adventure, which I found in the club. I trust it will always be there as it always has.

My experience in the club has drawn from the strong leadership of James Cullis, Ianni Vamvadelis and David Acott. During their years of leadership the club strengthened enormously in its achievements and its abilities. The club is often described as a "rolling mass". As with any rolling mass its direction and inertia must be focused. I hope that my term in office can be likened to the term of one of these past Chairs, whose drive and focus has always been an inspiration to me.

Kevin Iles executed with clinical precision a very successful meets calendar for the year, with some of the highlights being the Fresher's Country meet and Montague Meets. The 30 Hoare Hut Birthday was a huge success with the

original hut builders present to admire their handiwork. UCT dominated the SASSU climbing competition again while the Boland 90 teams set a precedent for teams competing next year. There were no expeditions this year, though we can expect a trip to Swaziland next year with a recce having been performed in the Malolotja Nature Reserve. A range of brilliant holiday destinations was arranged from Augrabies to the Drakensberg.

Socialite, Christina Jongsens is to be commended for her efforts in organizing the legendary Cocktail Party, the MSC Film Festival and the Cheese and Wine. A number of high profile speakers kept club members thoroughly enraptured at every Wednesday evening social.

The Huts was well maintained by the Hut Convenor, Kerry "Berry" Botha with a number of work parties keeping Hoare and Pells in good nick. Unfortunately the western side of Pells Hut's roof was blown off in a storm, which will be repaired.

The future of Zuurberg as an untouched nature reserve is bright with Ant Kaschula having completed a number of significant projects to ensuring the property be declared a Natural Heritage Site. Many pines were hacked and paths re-built. Wolraad Euvrard ensured the proper management of the Witels and maintained the access road while having to rebuild the deteriorating bridge.

The snow Gods were kind this year with many feet of snow being deposited. Kilian Hagemann, ski master and convenor extraordinaire, successfully completed the arduous task of refurbishing the lift to an operational state.

David Glass performed his task of maintaining the equipment with pride and he too ensured that the climbing activities of the club were diverse. A bouldering mat was acquired to keep UCT climbing at the fore and the existing club equipment was maintained. Much skiing equipment was also acquired.

The MSC website underwent a successful overhaul thanks to compu-guru Michael Marconi and promises to serve as a great IT platform for the years to come. Visit this site for the latest information at [www.sportsclubs.uct.ac.za/mountain](http://www.sportsclubs.uct.ac.za/mountain).

Ruth Woudstra produced a brilliant journal of

all the activities undertaken the previous year. The journal as always, will serve a role in history well.

The demographics of the club still remain a concern with it not being reflective of Upper Campus' demographics. I urge all club members to make an effort to allow our club to become the engine through which mountaineering can become accessible to all the people of South Africa.

The leadership developed through being involved in the club is an integral part of every member's development. The club places a high priority on training our members in the necessary regard. An "Introduction to hiking" lecture module was initiated this year, and was well received. A First Aid course and a Thomas Stretcher training course were conducted. I hope to see more mountain leadership courses organised in the future.

A number of projects were initiated and will hopefully come to fruition soon. A database of alumni MSC members was started and work is underway to expand it. Details of this project are on the aforementioned website. The proposal of an annual alumni event received much support with the most likely time of year being the Easter weekend. The Expedition fund is gathering initiative with the first international expedition proposed to be the 'Africa Expedition 2002'.

In general there were no fires, no accidents and no court cases!

As with any thanks giving, it is not always possible to thank all the people who gave ideas, sweat and encouragement along the way. I would sincerely like to thank everyone who has contributed to the club during the past year: your contribution has made a difference.

I would like to recall the Awards Ceremony at the AGM of 2001. As I mentioned earlier, the club is full of extraordinary people and as we know extraordinary people deserve extraordinary awards. The first, the esteemed 'Golden Spade of the Year Award' for the hardest working individual went to "Stud Muffin" Mike Sands. Anyone who is able to give himself that nickname is a deserved winner! The traditional 'Burnt Out Boot award'

went to fresher Julia Wakeling for her endless bounce: be it up or down a mountain. The less conventional 'Hooters Award' for the most elegant position when in tow on the ski lift went to Nadine. Nic Gibson earned himself the 'Vogue Award' for the best-dressed mountaineer whilst Steve Bradshaw was the proud recipient of the 'Least Improved Climber of the year award'. The club also boasted it's own pioneer, Selebelo Selamolela. Sele won the 'Christopher Columbus' award, not for discovering a new continent, but rather the cable car station on route Devil's Peak!

The Mountain and Ski Club achieved a lot this year. I thank the entire committee of 2001 for your selfless efforts to undertake and complete the projects at hand. Special mention must be made in no particular order, to Wolraad Euvrard, Kevin Iles, Ben Knights, Gavin Greenwood, Kilian Hagemann, Ant Kaschula, David Glass and Michael Marconi the deserved winners of the coveted MSC Service Award badges. Receipt of this award is a true indication of the love, loyalty and dedication with which these members contributed to the club.

"The time has come the Walrus said to speak of many things." Of beautiful hills and valleys, people and skies. Of friends and foes, of rock and rope. Of love and laughter. Of tears and time.

Till we next shake, rock, rattle and roll, God Bless and Blue Skies to you all!



Adriano Silvestro Iorio  
2001 Chairman



## EAGLE'S NEST SUNDOWNERS

By Nick Croukamp

Time drifted by serenely as the sun began its gentle arc towards the western horizon. Thus began the very first hike by the Mountain and Ski club this year - late! The tranquillity was marred only by the drumming of fingers as the group of seven waited at the info centre for the eighth member (hike leader) Kevin Iles.



The delays were not over yet - the Universe conspired against the MSC members from reaching the summit on time. After what seemed an eternity the second car with traffic-jam aficionado Kevin as the driver arrived at the neck and we proceeded towards Constantia Neck to begin our hike up to Eagles Nest. After a brisk half-hour walk and we were up the mountain just in time to watch the sun set. Initially there were fears that no one had actually brought any sundowners, but Lilia proved that the MSC members have more mettle than to forget their drinks. Jocelyn showed her true self by loosing the bottle top and forcing the hapless hikers to finish it, although no one complained. Muscadell and a gorgeous sunset amongst new friends - the perfect start to an exciting year.

## CHAPMAN'S PEAK

By Beth Ginsberg

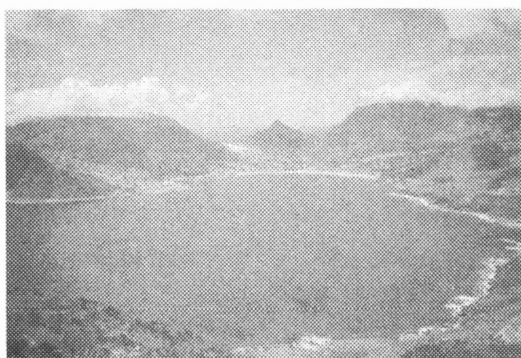
Twelve members of the Mountain and Ski Club grasped the opportunity presented by Sax Appeal Day to disappear up a mountain somewhere instead of selling magazines while wearing funny clothing. We left campus bright and early (10am) and drove just past Hout Bay, to the start of a trail leading up Chapman's Peak. The sun shone down benevolently (i.e. the temperature was about 40 degrees) Led by Sam and Jacek, we braved the first very steep part of the hike. As we climbed, the view over Hout Bay became increasingly spectacular. Luckily nobody fell down the mountain as a result! With aching legs - for those of us not accustomed to climbing anything more than about half of the Jammie Steps, we heaved huge sighs of relief as the path leveled out. Just as we regained our breath it was taken away again by the next installment of stunning view as we arrived on the neck just before Chapman's Peak itself.

Those of us who were by now thoroughly exhausted were only kept going by promises of a pub on top of the peak. Of course everyone believed that story... The last push to the top of the peak was especially rocky and steep and it was with the utmost relief and joy that we



embraced the Holy Beacon at the top. We made ourselves comfortable on the rocks and feasted on our lunches and on the sumptuous view of sea, mountains and villages. The lizards also seemed to enjoy our offerings of food!

When we had finished eating we climbed down to the bottom of the mountain, except for those parts that were so steep that it was easier to slide down on our butts. Some of our group members decided that they still had huge amounts of energy left, and took a detour up Lower Chapman's Peak on the way.



Upon arrival at the bottom we finished the remnants of our lukewarm water and headed for Hout Bay beach, where we bodyboarded, waded in or just chilled on the sand. This is a great hike for beginners, as there is a marvelous view for such a short hike, and of course the beach at the bottom makes it all worthwhile! All in all, it was a really good change from lectures, tutorials and all the other evils of most Tuesdays.

## HELDERBERG DOME

By ~~Bridget~~ Lotti Magni

Members of the hike: Richard Kahle, Geoff (squared), Gugu, Colette, a visiting lecturer and his wife from Croatia and me.

The cloud was low over the mountain and there was a cold wind blowing as us happy day-trippers bid the hardcore (dampish) hikers farewell at the info center. They were bound for the hut up in the clouds whilst we were bound for the aptly named Helderberg mountain with only our sunglasses, cameras and knapsacks (full of yummy lunch goodies) on our backs.

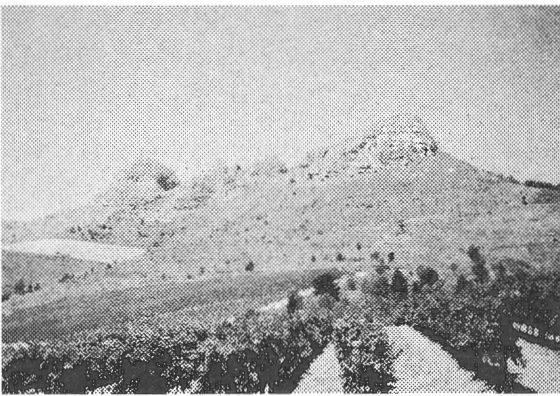
By the time we reached the Helderberg the gray clouds were just a dream, the only clouds breaking the blue sky were very high cirrus. As we donned our boots in the garden, Richard made friends with a local tortoise who soon became camera shy after having a lens poked in her face.

The botanical gardens are very interesting and perfect for the elderly (post grads) with nice flat walkways and provided an interesting info board (for botanists) and a lovely teagarden with a yummy looking apple tart. Our slave driver leader wouldn't let us stay for breakfast so we set off up the boardwalk. We had bought a map from the shop, which proved useless with the only redeeming factor being its pretty coloured routes, but even these didn't correspond with the coloured feet we discovered once out of the gardens. Luckily our intrepid leader had pre-read and lead us through the winding roads up the mountain pointing out at walls of protea saying: "There should be springbok and blesbok there" and: "this should be a great view of the coast." It was only as we rose higher and the protea gave way to shorter fynbos that these views became evident with spectacular views spreading from Somerset West to the Strand and beyond including the surrounding vineyards and forests.

After Disa Gorge we started zigzagging up the

hill. This was fine except for being past by little kiddies who were running up the hill before breakfast. Halfway up the hill we were barked at by a troop of baboons - certain mountain men took this as a primeval call to their roots and started aping around on the rocky outcrops and hanging out on the ledges. The baboons were unimpressed and disappeared, so the climbers gave up and moved on.

The view from the saddle between West Peak and the rest of the range was a taste of what was to come. There lay the Cape Flats below us, warming in the sun and stretching out to Table Mountain, which was shivering under its blanket. From the saddle the gradient turned downwards and we made good time contouring around the other side of the dome as the panorama stretched further still to include Stellenbosh and Paarl.



An inconspicuous path up a gully took us up to a saddle, which had us wondering about our whereabouts. To the right, a steep climb to a high peak and to the left the path seemed to peter out as it led to an awe inspiring sheer cliff reaching way above our heads and dropping deep into the valley below. The leaders were pretty certain about the former being our Dome

but some of the group were taking strain and were not partial to climbing uncharted rocky cliffs, so we decided to follow the path more taken. As it turned sharply upwards before the cliffs we discovered that it led to the real McCoy. But once again the slope was steep and the older members of the party took strain so the ladies remained behind as the men powered up the slope to 'bag' their peak. As we waited we had lunch and discussed politics whilst Colette caught a power nap, so that when the men returned and our thoughtful leader offered to take us to the top we were fresh and keen to take on the Dome. What a peak! 360 degrees of panorama! As you boulder hop towards the final beacon you can hardly stop looking at the view. To top it all off, the gray knuckles of cloud churning off the Hottentots Holland range caused a rainbow to arch over the Somerset West valley below us, giving the whole valley a magical feel.

The trip back chasing the boys was fast and uneventful, although our intrepid leader had to go and find a lost sheep who had been demoted by a DANGER THIS PATH IS CLOSED\* sign. The stream in Disa Gorge provided welcome refreshment of unpurified, unsterilized (can only be a doctor writing... -ed.) water which kept us going all the way back along our winding road. It was nice, after a long day, to see our cars again and return to wet and windy Cape Town in time for supper.

\*If you want to discourage mountain men from using a path rather use a sign saying "Really boring Taal Monument 25km.... will be examinable and for marks"



# APRIL HOLIDAY

## WE CAME, WE SAW, WE HIKED: Oorlogskloof trail, Northern Cape

By Sarah Gaines and Samantha Becker

### The Team:

Sarah: Camel woman, American rock star.

Marian: Yeti woman, onsite, on demand physio.

Climber Jayson: archaeologist onsite, Bushmen painting interpreter, official garbage carrier. (his pack had to be made heavier dammit!)

Uncle Markus: German tourist and hiking machine.

Dodgy humour provider: Jacek and his tie-dyed undies.

Sebastien: the French, not German tourist.

Sean: B&W photographer and sunset chaser.

Geoff and his run-away-bakkie: rock pool racer and the owner of camo -underwear

Sam: custodian of porno pink Arsehole hat, unflustered-from-relaxed-passing-by-oncoming-freight-trucks.

*And of course our intrepid leader:* Kevin "Tupac" Illes: proud convert of Weight Watcher's diet plan.



### The Hike:

After reading some articles, which wove images of unspeakable agony, pain, and difficulty, not to mention the packs-on packs-off dance of chimneying, we were expecting a week of endurance and Darwinism. Luckily, for our imaginations and for all of us in general, the reality proved to be much sweeter, even thought-provoking and downright breath taking (not breath taking away) So, the moral of this introduction is to never to pre-judge hike difficulty from written articles (accompanied by photos of elderly couples) entirely, but go out there and have your own experience.

**Day 1** begun after a lengthy drive, with Sam birdwatching from the passing lane whilst overtaking trucks, passengers munching away obliviously on salted rusks (all roads from Cape Town must lead to Piketberg or from it?), and the occasional appearance of the runaway bakkie with its unlikely pair reliving their shared heritage. We arrived at the spot after a 10km drive through the reserve. We loaded our heavy packs onto unwilling backs and headed off with sunset approaching. After much deliberation as to where South was, we did the first 4km with ease. The campsite, to Jacek's horror (as he was carrying his own tent) was furnished with spacious safari tents, and even mattresses. That evening was spent falling into rivers, courtesy of Sarah (everyone needs a little encouragement sometimes), boiling loads of tea and eating 1kg of pasta (no charge for the pebbled filling!) and sauce between the 10 of us, resulting in a feast of bread and cheese, and

shocked expressions, as Kevin had forgotten to cook the other kilo. We settled down retiring into warm bags and pure silence.



We awoke on **Day 2** after some nightmares - must have been that MSG food...After a good breakfast, our packs were hauled on and with each footstep of the 8km, we

penetrated deeper into the Kloof, further away from civilization, or if you're pessimistic - help. This day proved to be a toughie, with one really good tunnel and questionable roped rock-crossings. The fray is part of the adventure, not so? As we passed loads of baboon long drops the question burning in our minds was: Do they hang their butts over the cliff? After swimming in the icy cold river, Jayson, our climbing fanatic, soloed the sandstone topped peak, and the rest of us normal people clambered uncomfortably up giant steps. We laid our hungry eyes on camp and unloaded the monster packs. A stones throw from camp were some beautiful San paintings: clear hand prints, entoptic imagery and faded images of ochre eland prancing out from the cave walls. There was a huge pile of Dassie dung nearly a meter thick in some parts, wedged into this rock, quite uncomfortably close to one of our tents, aptly, the full-of-shit tent. Some people were less impressed than others with the first-come-first-serve law. As the night shrouded over us, the dew set in as we ate Tramezini and carrot/potato mix, our first filling meal. Whilst we were all in awe of the scenery and strange rock

forms, the group huddled together for a game of Arsehole, rock scrambling and finally the welcoming sleeping bags.

Classic comments of the day were: "What's burning?" uttered by everyone as Sebastian passed by. Unbeknown to us, he had dried his shirt by the fire hence the smell. From the comfort of her tent Sam saw a shadow creep over the peak overlooking the camp. Assuming that some people were taking a midnight stroll, she went back to sleep; the next day it turned out midnight strolls took place further behind the camp. Was it a leopard she saw?

**Day 3** dawned on us with the fresh sun evaporating the thick droplets of dew collected on our sleeping bags. Today was going to be a long day - all 12 km of it, where the Kloof was crossed, resulting in a *big* hill to climb. Aching limbs, bleeding thighs from the unwelcomed attention of the *wag n' Bietjie* bush and strained muscles as immense rocks were scrambled and the awesome chimney ascended. The ropes leading into the chimney were probably placed to help the weary hiker, but turned out to be the biggest hindrance.

The only tantalizing evidence of mammalian presence was the numerous and sometimes fresh spoor left on our trail. The animals had probably heard us from miles and hid wherever they could. Wild



donkey, aardvark, Jacek and leopard prints were seen. The only member of our party to actually see some wild life was Jacek. But even the bushbuck he saw managed to hide from the others.

**By Day 4**, Jayson's garbage collection was starting to reek - probably due to a tin of pilchards Jacek had opened up the day before. This was the day of the longest trek 17 km. Strangely enough this turned out to be a very



We finally reached our camp and the most awesome swimming hole. After a very refreshing swim, we broke into groups one going off to find more paintings, another to scramble up the sandstone dome to see the sunset. The third group of lazy bums settled into the campsite, gorged themselves on snacks, muesli and begun the preparations for a good meal.

Comments of the evening:

"Do you want to climb into bed with me?"  
Geoff innocently to Sierra.

"This American is a good representative of her nation."

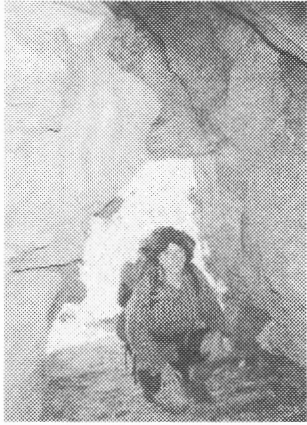
In reply "Well you aren't good representatives of South Africa!"

Perhaps the bitterness showed through as our American was Arsehole for 4 rounds...

relaxing day compared to the previous two. We walked through the most incredible scenery; the best way to describe it: huge chunks of elephant hide strewn over the grey/green brush. Everybody lost count of how many rocky arches we passed under. *Arrie se Punt* was the highlight of the day, and our highest point in the hike (915m) affording us awesome views of the escarpment. We saw valleys carved out by merciless glaciers and the deep red of parched earth. All cell phones were predictably whipped out (Ach! South Africans). Marian called her entire family, and Markus confirmed that he had become an Uncle. Later on, the women got to ogle at half naked men clad in dodgy underpants while we all had a refreshing dip in huge rock pools on top of the escarpment.



Campsite was reached with much happiness from our feet's perspective, as we slipped out of gently steaming shoes and drank sweet river water. This was our last supper (with Easter just around the corner, too), and the mood was a bit sombre. That night Sam rescued the



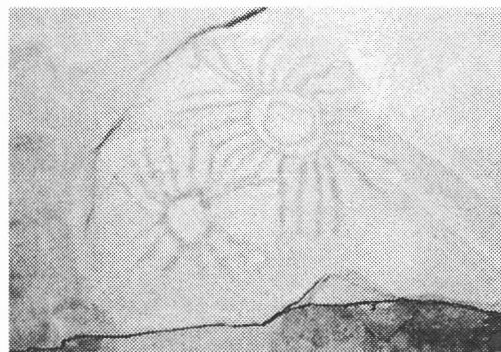
symptomatically sticky South African pasta, whilst Sean did yet another sunset scramble, and the others a riverside exploration. The lazy ones got to eat smash and soya

mince, although as usual there were always two or three people going hungry (a worthy sacrifice for the vermillion sunset sinking across the quiet blue valley floor), and crime of crimes, the sugar ran dry - luckily Jacek and Jayson kindly re-distributed their prized white and brown diamonds of sweetness.

Leftover night thankfully provided light packs on **Day 5**. Full stomachs, the faint dreams of flush toilets and hot water on demand were just becoming more and more of a hallucination. We awoke with the birds, but no worms, as hip-hip-horray, there was only muesli to feast on. The group split into two one took the red route-apparently swarming with tunnels, interesting chimneys, the other two took the quicker yellow route, which wound right on the edge of the escarpment, giving breathtaking views. Due to some tantalizing red-route L-tunnels, the hikers who took the alternate yellow route were afforded three exhilarating hours painting-the-

town-of-Niewoudville-red, gorging in the decadence of the small, dusty reserve side metropolis 'bulb capital of the world'. When next there, make sure to check out the ice-cold coke and hand pump pipe organ.

In retrospective, despite low food stores (or a self-manifesting fear of such) the walk long at times, this hike proved to be very interesting, foreign and absolutely alien in parts. The scenery was absolutely amazing, the plants, a botanists wet dream. The only dodgy part of the hike are the abundance of ladders which are not connected to the rocks, the ropes which more often than not obscure the easiest scrambling route and the presence of terrible flesh ripping, hooked thorny bushes located at the inconvenient knee height. One of the undisputed highlights of the trip were the rock paintings well, the clear ones, where there was actually other things painted besides handprints. These paintings evoked a feeling that us as a part of the earth are as transient and as fragile as the ecosystem.



## KLIPSPRINGER TRAIL

By Baz Steyn

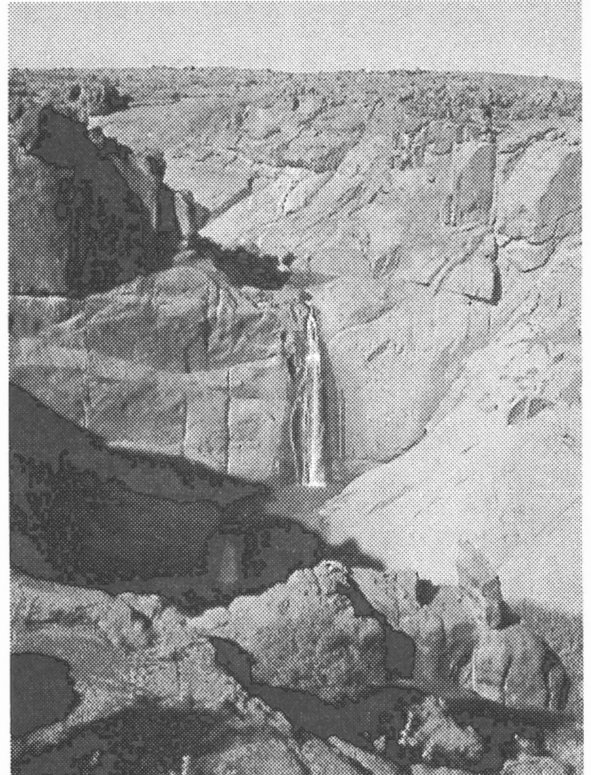
Take the **N2**, then get on the **M5**, then take the **N1**, and finally the **N7** - a simple yet deceptive plan to start our trip. Halfway to *Paarl*, we realised our simple plan had gone wrong: The turn off to the **N7** was in fact closer to Cape Town than Johannesburg. Taking corrective measures and backtracking quite a few kilometres, we were able to get on with our trip, but only after the *alpha male* (hike leader) decided that the people travelling in his car were absolutely pathetic at map reading like it was our fault. Anyway, Augrabies close their gates at 22:00. Arriving at 22:05, it seemed like the chances of us sleeping outside were great. Whatever our *alpha male* did to get the gates open, we didn't want to know (and we hope that if it is ever found out, it won't become the butt of emails sent round to MSC members!). After becoming settled in, we went to view the falls. At night, under a full moon the falls looked absolutely magnificent. Our adventure had begun...

### DAY ONE The Day Of Flies

Our hike started out as well as one could wish: the alpha male got us lost trying to find the way out of the camp site! Anyway, after it was established that we should have made a right when we made a left (or vice versa), we were on our way.

The first thing that greeted us was a wonderful view of the canyon that the Orange River had carved out at a place called *Arrow point*. No description can do justice to it. Imagine a huge

ravine churning with water, about 70m deep, and 18km long, silhouetted against a dramatically barren landscape. At most times of the day, this view would be enough to take one's breath away, but it was extra special in morning, when everything was starting to wake up. Moments like these make carrying 1 tonne backpack in unbearable heat worthwhile.



After a bit of walking, it was time for lunch. A spot near the river was chosen thus providing a means for cleaning up utensils etc. Flies were bothering us quite a bit before this, but as we took out our lunch, a call to war was initiated by all flies in the park. In short, flies big time, attacked us. Our alpha male seemed to be the only person impervious to being attacked. "The person who has the most willpower will not be attacked by the flies" was his response. Unfortunately for that bit of wisdom, our group came to conclusion **that flies also have taste**, thus our alpha male was left alone.

After our lunch we came across a troop of baboons. Baboons are really weird creatures, especially when one of them could have infiltrated our group and no one would have been the wiser!

Marching ever forward, we saw and experienced some great things: Waterfalls, gorges and FLIES. In fact, the fly problem got steadily worse after lunch. At this point, I should mention what other wild life we saw on our first day: Lizards. Yes, we saw multi-coloured ones, grey ones, fat ones, small ones. Caleb discovered that if you threw a stone to The Lizards, they would chase after it resulting in a lot of time wasted trying to get these lizards to commit suicide by throwing pebbles over the ledge.

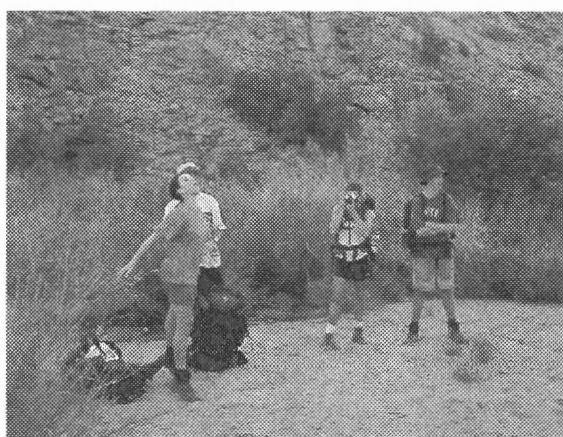
Nearing the end of the first day, we came to a huge ravine. Our alpha male decided to inject some fun into the trip by attempting to dislodge a rock. Unfortunately, he discovered rocks are quite heavy. That didn't stop Jules, whose determination paid off in quite a spectacular rock fall. After our rocky experience, we made tracks to the overnight hut.

After hiking 14.5km in semi-desert, a hut with a toilet, mattresses, dustbin and fireplace is sheer luxury. All of these great amenities were present at our huts, and thus we had a great place to sleep, make a fire and talk. Just before the sun went down, Jules discovered that there was a path to the river. So most of us trotted down for a swim. In my opinion, that was the highlight of the day. The water was warm, the company was great, the atmosphere was

jubilant, and most of all, the scenery was spectacular. All in all, a very good first day.

## **DAY TWO - Drolspoeg**

The second day started a bit better than the first: We did not get lost trying leaving the hut! So after breakfast, we set out. The first thing we did on the second day was descending into the ravine. So most of the hike on the second day was along the riverbed, which was great for swimming.



A word of caution was muttered about there being crocs in this part of the river, so swimming was deemed a bad idea. After half hour with a sun that was showing no mercy, Niel decided that he had to investigate the croc situation personally. Afterall, if a croc came across Niel, I am sure it would be too scared to try and attack. Adri decided that he had better follow Niel into the river to help him if any attack occurred. Caleb had the same idea, and pretty soon, most of our group were in the water. And then, it happened... A blood-curdling scream! Something had taken a huge bite out of Julia. The crocs someone shouted, and pretty soon afterwards, everyone came out of the water. Jules's leg looked like it had been given a hickey by Dracula himself. After a bit of reasoning and speculation, it was discovered



that Barbel inhabit this part of the Orange River. And guess what... **BARBELS BITE**. So after the mystery was cleared, we walked on.

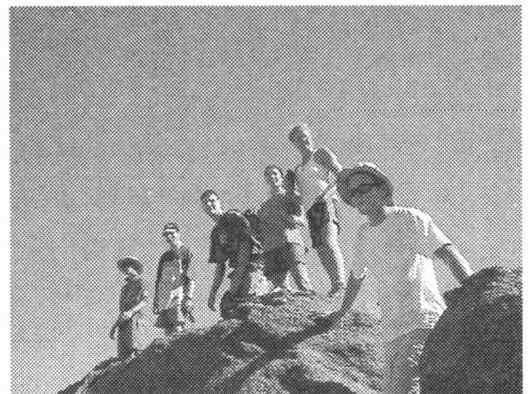
We had to negotiate a few boulders before we decided to have lunch. Now it is said that everyone has one truly great idea in his or her lifetime. For Niel, his time had come: "Why don't we eat lunch on the other side of the river on the rocks" he said. Everyone thought this was a great idea, so all the food was packed into a black bag and hoarded across the river. After lunch, we all slept! Yes, sleeping is allowed when one hikes for three days (it is just usually done at night ;). After we had finished our rest, we re-started our hike. It was at this point that Barry discovered that if you make a bad job of putting suntan lotion on your back because you can't really reach, when you burn your back, a huge hand mark would probably appear. Well, at least we knew who was to provide comic relief for the hike!

After doing about another 5km of walking and a bit more swimming, we got to a sandy patch. It was now time to play... Drolspoeg. Aside: for those of you have not been initiated into the wonderful game of drol spoeg, it involves putting dassie droppings (drol) into your mouth and attempting to propel it further than any other of the contestants. Most of us played, the one exception being Niels (not be confused with Niel) who threatened bodily harm if anyone tried to put shit in his mouth! After quite a few rounds, the winner was Adri now we have absolute proof that shit does indeed come out of his mouth. After drolspoeg, we found our way to the hut. As usual, luxurious amenities

were provided in the hut, and we all slept in the knowledge that we would have to do 12km in about 4 hours the next day in order to arrive on time for river rafting down the Orange River.

### **DAY THREE - River Rafting**

We rose early in the morning, and set out before we had breakfast, the idea being that food was for the weak. The weak eventually won when we decided to eat breakfast about an hour after departing. It should be noted here that most of the game we saw on our trip was on this day. We saw klipspringer, dassie, more lizards, eagles and even giraffes. We hiked really fast on this day to get back to the campsite for river rafting. One piece of scenery that is worth mentioning



was a place called the *moon rock*. This is a huge rock, with pockmarks all over it, resembling the surface of the moon. We had a great view of the whole area from this point, and we used it to take a needed break. It was at this point where our alpha male felt the need to exploit his dominance. One of the girls had decided to empty all the water from her spare water bottle over him. Now as everyone knows, the alpha male owns all the females, and thus disciplines them as well. Action was needed by the alpha male to show his dominance, and thus the offending female found herself in a pool of

stagnant water while the alpha male grunted with delight!

We had now come back to our original campsite and were thus ready for our river-rafting trip. But first, lunch - in full view of Augrabies falls. A more wonderful setting for lunch could not have been asked for. River rafting started well: We were all picked up by the river rafting people and taken to the place where we were to start. After a lecture about what was in store, we were all set to go.

Everyone took the white water in their strides and there were no swimmers hardly any. The highlight of this adventure was when we came to an area of serene water that stretched on for kilometres. It was here that we all had refreshments. It was a very cool feeling: Having biscuits, juice and sweets all whilst floating down the Orange River. After the river rafting, a campsite with a pool table was found, and we played pool late into the night. Our trip was nearing the end. All in all, a great trip. Before I finish, I should divulge what each of us discovered about ourselves during this trip:

\* *Adriano* discovered that 5.6 is the key to being a great leader.

\* *Barry* discovered that he had an almost infinite capacity for making dumb, yet funny remarks.

\* *Caleb* discovered that the river life was for him.

\* *Dianne* discovered that she had spunk at least that was what was written on her car.

\* *Graham* discovered that there were other people besides himself that liked *Godel Escher Bach*.

\* *Jules* discovered that the idea of her foot as Barbel food is not so *fishy* after all.

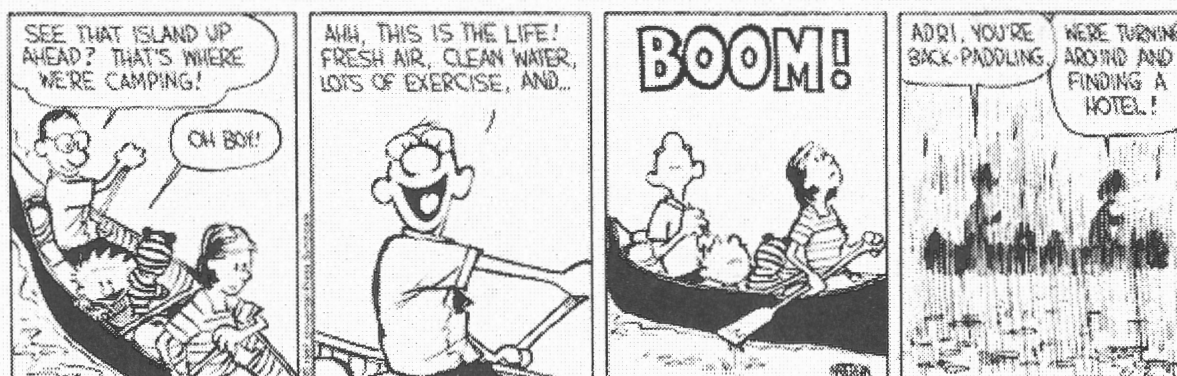
\* *Bronwyn* discovered that if she gave people massages on a hike, it made her really popular.

\* *Niel* (a.k.a. Cyril) discovered that he could learn more than two new things a day but doing that really pushed the envelope.

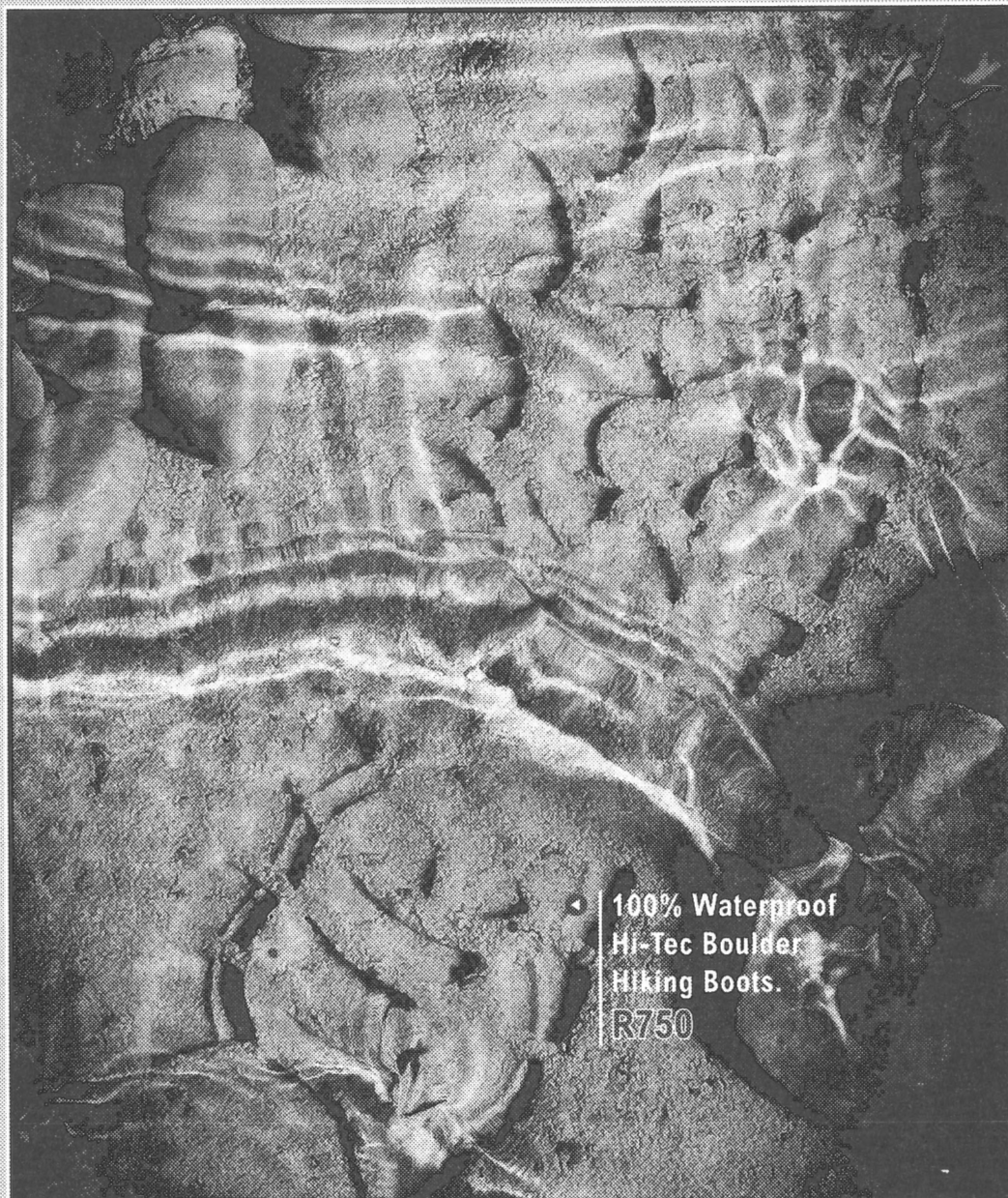
\* *Niels* discovered he had the potential to inflict bodily harm on anyone who even mentioned the word *drolspoeg*.

\* *Russell* discovered something, it's just that nobody (including himself) knows what.

\* *Sierra* discovered that a baboon, a monkey and George W Bush were three different things (although one can be forgiven about putting George W Bush in that category), and that Dassies are not rabbits.







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## THAILAND

By: Mattieu de Villiers



A good way to start off a new year of varsity is to live out the infamous DMM slogan 'climb now, work later' to the letter. In this spirit, Craig, Gordon and I left for Thailand in mid-January to meet up with

Brett who had more

elaborate traveling arrangements. And there Brett was... overlooking the calm sea as the distant memory of his faithful nokia fades; now reaching for a fruit-shake with his right hand... once again complete.

We found our new home at Tonsai beach and quickly discovered the comforts of eating in our beachfront restaurant three meals a day.

Water is sold in 25 litre barrels at the same price as 4 1litre bottles at the far end of the peninsula.

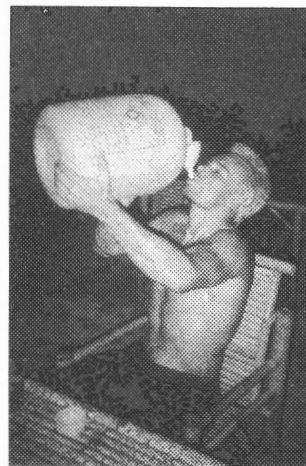
At the time of our first water fetching missions, we were still unaware of the existence of the jungle path that links Railay beach with Tonsai

beach. So we swam with the barrels between the two bays with our snorkeling gear and proved the theory that seawater is heavier than fresh water.

Due to the extreme humidity and warmth of the day,



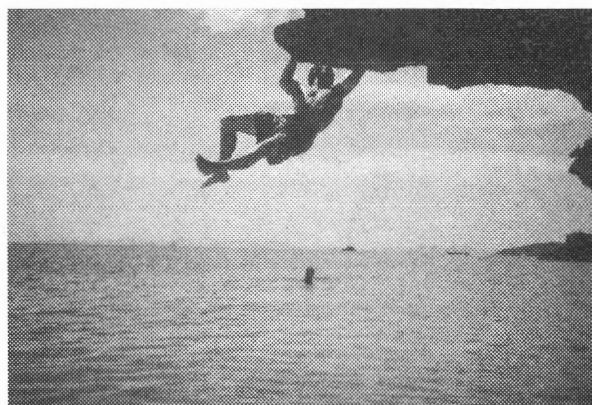
we restricted ourselves to climbing in mornings and afternoons only. Even so, it remains a challenge not to drip sweat onto the ropes. Craig climbed like a daemon and worked



an 8a with Hong, a moody Korean who was rumored to have thrown a panga into the back of a former climbing buddy. We were a bit concerned when Craig managed to red-point the route, which appeared a bit out of Hong's grasp.

After two hard days of climbing, there is nothing more deserving than a full rest day that starts off with an 'eat as much as you can' breakfast buffet at Railay Beach Hotel. We completely stuffed ourselves. Other, more decent tourists gave us looks of disapproval as we walk past to our table with towers of pancakes. Its nice being in a foreign country where you simply don't care what people think.

On one of these rest days, Brett and I went to



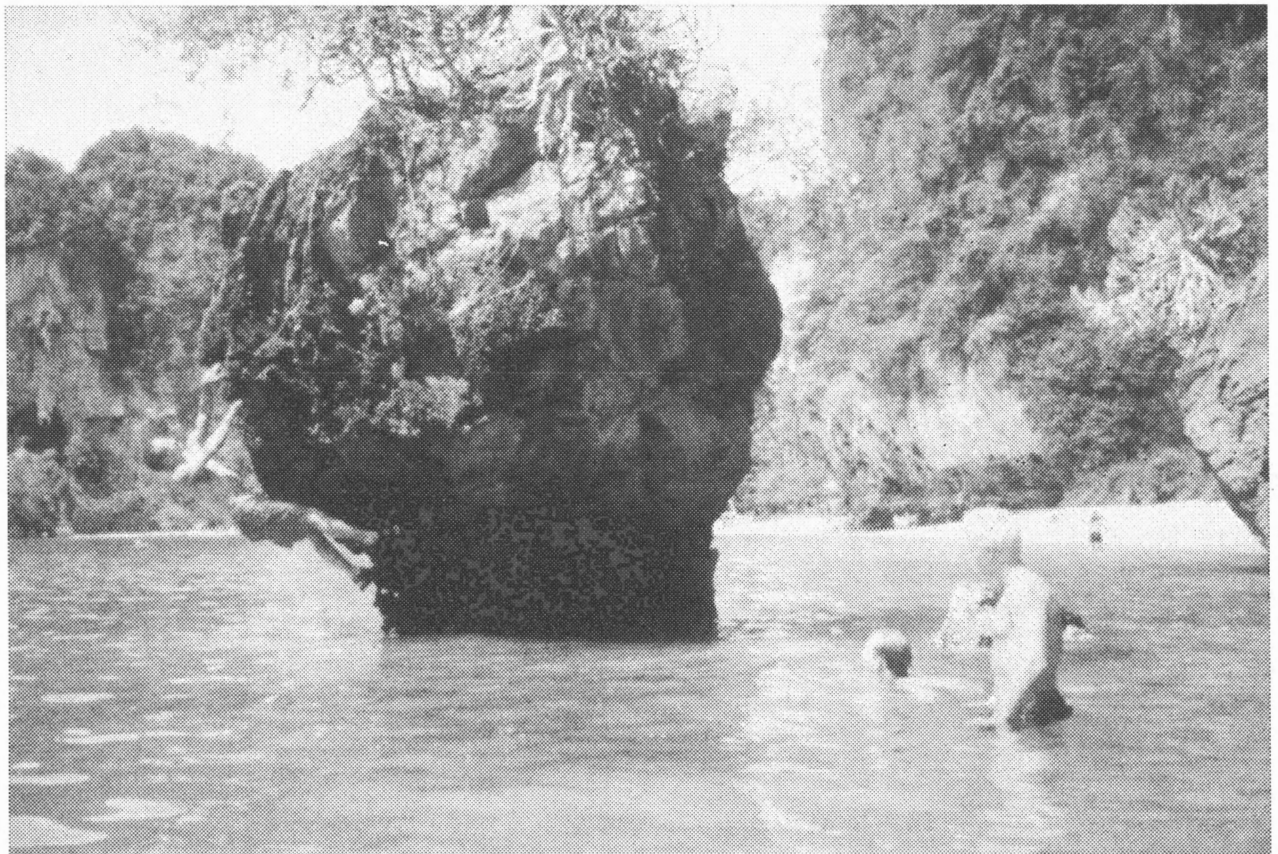
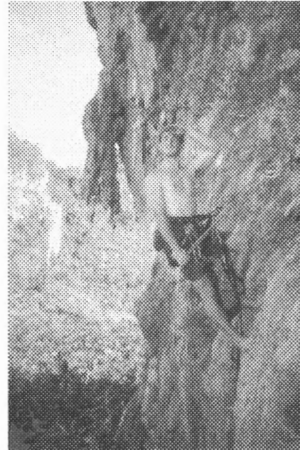
play tactical frisbee on Phra Nang beach. The aim is to throw the frisbee in such a way that we would be forced to stumble over topless sunbathers 'by accident' as we catch it. However, after many of my terribly aimed



throws, some guy approached us requesting that we play elsewhere in fear of us injuring his kids. Only then did it come to mind that it might be a bit painful if we actually hit someone. The more subtle 'tactical photography' involves one of us doing handstands or posing while another aims the camera towards the 'pineapples' in the background.



Besides the beaches, caves, cliffs, and islands we visited a weird lagoon inside a mountain and left very little unexplored. There is an amazingly high concentration of natural features on the Phra Nang peninsula geologically speaking.



# Climbing



## INTERVIEW: Dinko Basich

By: Samantha Becker

To get an idea about what individual climbers think about climbing in South Africa, I caught Dinko Basich on the ground for a brief interview:

### **1) When did you start climbing? How did you get introduced to the sport?**

On 25 April 1999, Craig Reed took me for my first climb. Being my first time ever, it was the most hectic, exhilarating and fearful climb of my life. After "Staircase" (Table Mountain), I was permanently hooked.

### **2) What has been the climbing highlight of the year for you?**

Steve's 3-week AWESOME climbing road trip. Besides seeing most of South Africa, we gained a lot of experience on different rock in

a lot of different crags, cities and places. On the personal achievements list, my onsite record went up 2 grades in Montague and was stabilised on the road trip.

### **3) In your opinion, where is the best climbing in South Africa?**

Waterval Boven - to me its climber's paradise. You straggle out of your tent early in the morning and crawl to the indoor, heated swimming pool or the cold one outside to wake you up and soak up the steam. Then you gear up and walk to the edge of the cliff - gaping buttress where there are cliffs as far as the eye can see with streams and rock art adding to its heavenly look.

### **4) Have you entered any climbing competitions this year? If so, how are these events organised and what criteria do judges look out for in the competitors?**

Yes, each year a different University hosts the event, either by organising it, supplying the venue or both. The respective club (in our case MSC) organises nearly everything. The SASSU committee/committees have the last say in terms of sponsorships, grants, money available and venues. The event takes place on an indoor wall with detachable grips placed to map out a route set by a hired route-setter. The judges see how far you get up the route and award you according to the grip you last touched, held or



moved off.

**5) What do you think marks a good climber from a bad climber?**

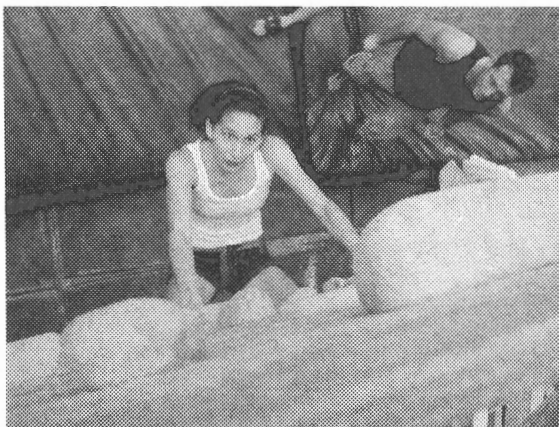


That's been a riddle for me for a while. When I saw South Africa's best climbers getting up routes I could only dream of, I thought that was what it took to be "good"; but

when watching some beginners climb with natural style and immense determination, I wonder whether climbing is mostly mental and not purely physical as I thought before. We really have some promising individuals in the club.

**6) In what direction do you think the MSC club should be going as far as climbing is concerned? What improvements should they make?**

Cape Town is in need of a decent lead-climbing wall. Perhaps if MSC invests into building a proper climbing gym (like they have overseas) and open it to the public, charging them a small levy and letting MSC members (with climbing shoes) climb there for free.



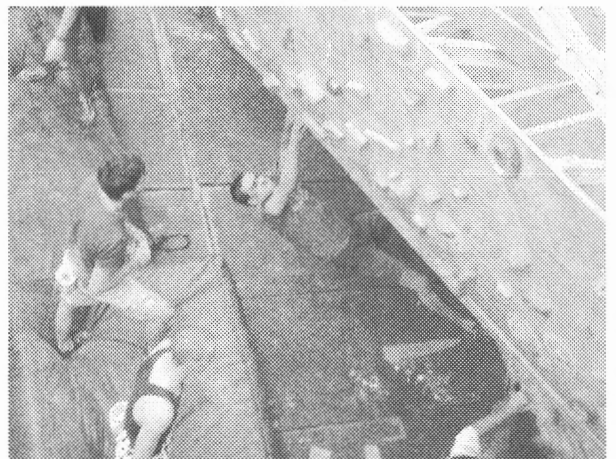
**THE DECATHLON**

(The 15-athlon?)

by: Ruth Woudstra

So, when they said, "Beginners are welcome to take part in the Decathlon", I assume that they expected you to score at least *some* points for the climbing events. But quite frankly, to score *any* points, your level of hardcoretivity had to be way above average. The only positive result for beginner climbers was that after the third event - by which time full marks would have awarded you 12 shots of vodka & OJ, they at least *looked* believable!

By definition, a decathlon comprises 10 events.



But since none of the organisers were into Latin, there were 15 events, 14 of which were completed. Aside from climbing events, there were strength tests - I won't even attempt to go into any equipment lingo, as well as Pacman and Russian Roulette-type games, completely arbitrary but were great for scoring points. The idea was that for each point scored you scored a shot of vodka and OJ. By the time the second round was over, climbers were swinging from the roof, jumping on top of each other, creeping under gym-mats and giving "cripple nipples!" (Not to incriminate anyone...except for Dave



Glass...)

Most  
unimpressed was  
Gordon Forbes,  
chief organiser,  
who ironically  
threatened to end

the event due to irresponsible drunken behaviour. A slurring friend seconded him: "I know we are all laughing now but we won't be laughing any more when somebody dies."

With that sobering thought the participants calmed down momentarily as the organisers unwillingly set up the last events. In the final round, everybody who had not been trashed before got *behoorlik gev..k* and among ensuing mayhem the winners were called out.

The runner-up prizes of masking tape and imitation drink were about as related to climbing as the poker - apparently chicks diggit lank. The winners of the Decathlon: Amica and Steve Bradshaw were awarded with puzzles to make Glen Hicks glow of satisfaction.

Many thanks to not only the guys who organised, but the INDIA team for providing entertainment throughout the day. As far as vodka and orange juice goes: we'll either see you next year or never again!

## SKOORSTEENKOP - A HIKER AT A CLIMBING MEET

25 March 2001

Leader: Tim

By: Jacek

Having done a lot of hiking and just two climbing meets last year, I thought I should do a bit more of this rock spider thing people get so excited about. So I signed up for the Hole, to find out later in the week that the meet is cancelled and that we're going to Skoorsteenkop instead. Whatever.

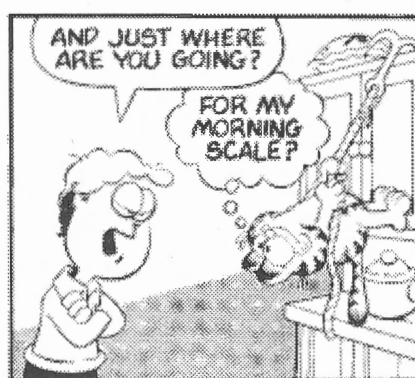
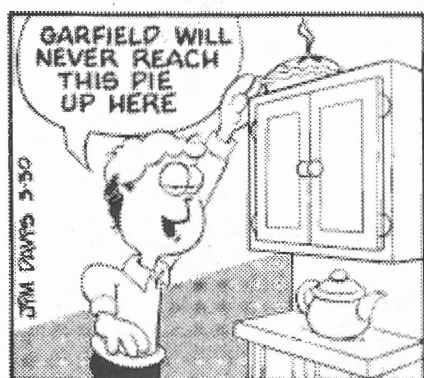
After showing up half asleep at the Info Centre a few minutes to 9am to watch the leader eat dry bread for breakfast and listen to people complain about hangovers, we left in a convoy at precisely 09h40. So far it was just like an ordinary hiking meet. The first differences showed up when the climbers started talking about the long, difficult walk-in.

For the benefit of other hikers, here are the translations of climbing jargon:

**Short walk-in** crag less than 50 meters of level jeep track from the car park.

**Long walk-in** a pleasant 5-minute stroll to get some circulation in your legs.

**All the way up the f\*\$#ing mountain ?!?!?**  
10 minutes walk at a 20-degree slope.





Eventually we all made it safely all the way up the f\*\$#ing mountain, and the real climbers started attempting all the 20-somethings, while



myself and the other non-climbers were left waiting for a lowly 17 to get opened up - much over an hour, and soon after that I found myself back on the rock face, where I now know I don't belong. After

being spat out of the easiest route a few times, I decided to entertain myself and went for a walk around the mountain to do some grade 5 scrambling and watch rock dassies.

Later I had some fun watching the climbers. Chief entertainer was certainly Angus, whose tricks included finding holds with his knees, traversing the face to offer others some chalk and of course a few spectacular verifications of Newton's Theory of Gravity. It was also amusing to observe how every shout of: "TAKE, TIM" was responded by our intrepid leader hauling in a few meters of rope.

Other quotes that should be mentioned were:

"If the green rope snaps off you still have the purple one with you",

"I'm keen to try that move but I wouldn't want to get killed",

"Don't worry, I went to the Dave Glass school of belaying",

"Who stole all the gear?" and the reply

"Wasn't me, though I wish it was",

"Medical insurance doesn't help you when you're dead" and of course

"ONE MOVE! ONE F\*\$#ING MOVE! F\*\$# THIS MOVE!"

So it was an interesting outing after all. Just

before leaving I thought I'd have a go at a 21, which Samantha made look easy. At least when I fell I was in a harness and couldn't get hurt, which was not the case for my male ego. I guess I should stick to hiking.

### More Slack Please

By: Gordon Forbes

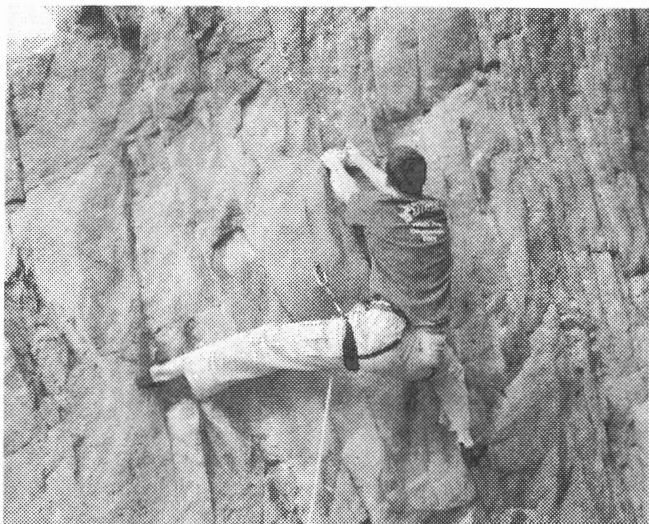
This article addresses the common misconception in climbing that too much slack is a bad thing. This is completely wrong, as in many cases the more slack the better. For those who aren't aware what a fall factor is, here is the maths. Very simply, the fall factor is the distance fallen divided by the amount of rope in the system.

The biggest fall factor is 2, and the smallest 0. A fall factor of 2 is bad. It hurts. However, important to note is that a small fall can have a high fall-factor and a large fall a low fall-factor. Since ropes are rated on the number of factor 2 falls they can take, it is important to minimise them. Here is how you can do it, and thus use your ropes for longer.

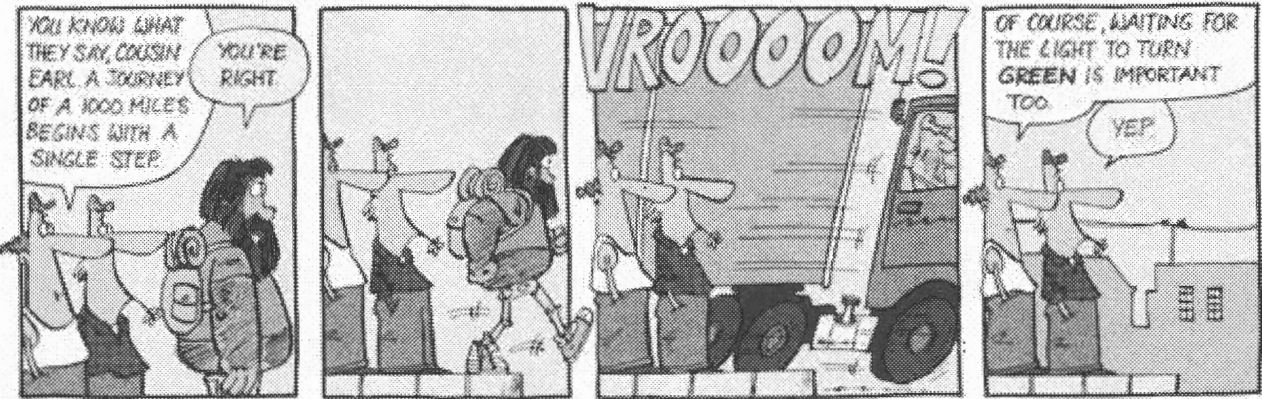
When starting the second pitch of your climb, make sure that you have as much slack as possible (but not too much so that you hit the ground). This will minimise your fall-factor. OK, you'll take a big winger, but that's part of the fun. It also means there will be less stress

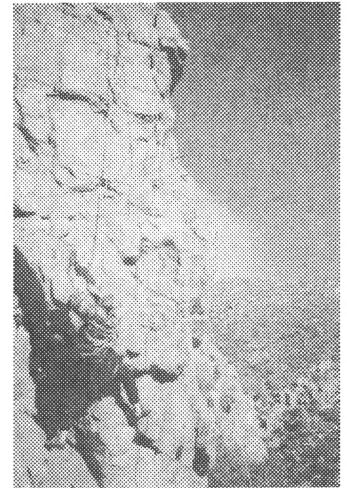
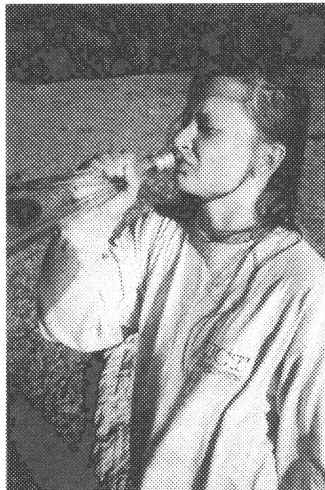


placed on your belay stance. So here's the comparison with as much slack as possible, and without it, in a hypothetical situation where you are 10m up from the belay with no gear placed, and you slip off (well that's your story). So there you have it. Make sure that you have extra slack in your system and you will enjoy many more years of climbing on your faithful rope.



<u>NO Slack</u> (I'm A Woes)	<u>Lots Of Slack Please</u> (50m will do)
Fall Distance: 10m To Belayer + 10m Past Belayer = 20m Total	Fall Distance: 10m To Belayer + 50m Past Belayer = 60m Total
Rope in System: 10m	Rope in System: 50m
Fall Factor: $\frac{20}{10} = 2$	Fall Factor: $\frac{60}{50} = 1.2$
Amount Of Pain: Extreme	Amount Of Pain: Minimal







## TABLE MOUNTAIN OVERNIGHT

By: Russell Shaw



It was with a sense of trepidation that we gathered at the info centre on a cloudy and VERY windy Saturday

morning. Another larger group headed off to Hangklip for sand boarding just stared at us and laughed when we told them we were going "up the mountain". Nonetheless we were all keen to give it a bash and an hour later we neared the base of Platteklip, the starting point for the ascent, not far from the cable station.

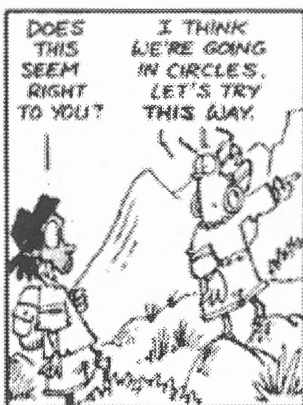
It was apparent even from down here that the wind was fairly strong and would only get worse. This suspicion was proved correct the higher we climbed, and soon we were clinging onto anything we could find to prevent being blown off the mountain! A distinctly concerned-looking Adriano (squadron leader) asked us if we wanted to continue or go back. Of course the answer had to be: "Push on this is fun!" A short while later we broke through the fog to reach the top and the change of mood was practically instantaneous. The chatting resumed and most

were heard to chirp Adriano as he checked his map every 37.6 seconds to make sure we were on the right path to the hut!

After knocking on the door of a hut that belonged to someone else and getting told to go elsewhere, we soon found our own shelter near the top of the old cable station high above Camps Bay. As gale force winds were still the order of the day, it was very reassuring to read that this hut had been built back in the 1920's surely the roof would still be above our heads when we woke up? Hot chocolate went down a treat and within half an hour everyone was well into their afternoon siesta after the day's exertions.

Seeing as there were only seven brave-hearts that made it up to the hut (the wind accounted for the other 14) we decided to go for a pooled supper. The standard tuna and tomato pasta together with Mtunzi's expertly fried chicken went down well with Fiona's box wine and Russell's muscadell. Roasted marshmallows seemed to be a perfect way to end the evening and after an exhaustive but thoroughly rewarding day, we settled down for the night.

Roughly half an hour later as the few still awake were well on their way to sweet dreams, some scratching noises were heard and a flashlight was switched on just outside the front door. Not knowing what to expect, we all stayed inside our





sleeping bags as the door creaked open and in hobbled Dave Acott on his beloved set of crutches. "Evening all!" he exclaimed as if he had been expected all along. Fiona seemed to be the most surprised with a comment of: "I thought it was some granny with a zimmer frame!" Fortunately most of the alcohol had already been consumed so there wasn't enough to keep Dave interested for too long!



The morning's weather was overcast (no surprises there) which made for a cool exit over the Woodhead Dam wall - barbed wire and all, and down Skeleton Gorge. It was great to feel the warm rays of the sun filtering through the haze and it was possible to get a faint view of Cape Town prior to entering the ravine. Two hours of pleasant downhill later and we finally made it back past the Newlands Reserve and back to UCT.

What a great weekend up in the clouds!

## **GREYTON - MacGREGOR TRAIL**

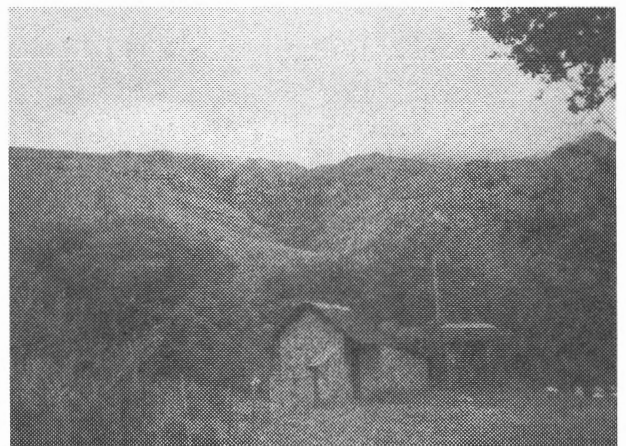
By: Greg Simpson

It was a frosty morning in early april, when a group of intrepid adventures set out for one of the greatest missions in Mountain and Ski Club history, namely the Greyton to Macgregor weekend hike.



This was no ordinary hike, for thier where hidden dangers of lusty locals and enthusiastic bushes. We set off from the one and half horse town of Greyton as the mist descended down the magestic sloaps of this ruggid and thirsty landscape. The advanced party was led by the genius of Kevin Iles who's kuning use of spoon was to be our saviour on more two occasions. He led with all the flair and panash that one expects from a would be laywer.

The rest of the renagades where made up of the effervestent Marcus Schazt, with the desesrt like sence of humour of our Polish import Jacek, who provided some lightnigng retorts to kevins often weak and disproportionate jokes. Bridget Magni, the doctor wanna-be with the big smile provided light entertianment for anyone who cared. Sam Becker and Rosi where inspirational in thier capacity as water bearers. And for me, impeckable behaviour.



Getting on to matter of the velt, the Greyton - Macgregor hike is a beautiful expression of fantastic scenery and good honest hiking. The trail is 15km, then after we stayed in a hut that sleeps several, and provides enchanting views to let your imagination flow. It is situated on



top of one of the highest peaks in the area and comes into sight at the perfect time. The owners are very friendly especially the farmer's daughter, as one of our party where to find out.

The hut cost 30 rand per person and is worth it. Get hold of Kevin for details. Beer and wine can be bought at competitive prices for the Oom Piet the farmer who for some odd reason never got out of his bakkie, rather chose to drive around his farm all day. I think he was trying to show off his new tyres.

Well thanks to Kevin for all his work and happy hiking.

p.s hi sam, i have not had time to check spelling and punctuation.

## HOUT BAY WALK

By: Carrie Cangelosi

The hike started bright and early, leaving campus at 7:45 AM. Well, it was early anyway. Five members of the Mountain and Ski Club set out to ascend the two highest mountains in the Hout Bay Range: Noordhoek Peak and

Constantiaberg. It was bright, as in smart, but not sunny - such an early start meant that we were able to avoid the hot sun and hike up the side of Noordhoek in the shade. This part of the hike was rather steep at parts, and a shortcut we accidentally took found us crawling up loose rocks. Arriving at the top of this part of the mountain, we were pleasantly greeted by a gently winding jeep track, which took us along a relatively level area with a lovely view and a wide variety of colourful wildflowers. A short hike finally brought us to the summit of Noordhoek, where we enjoyed lunch with a cool breeze and magnificent views of the coast. A cloud cover over our earlier path made for a lovely contrasting view. From our lunch site, Constantiaberg looked quite conquerable, if a bit cloudy, so we decided to go ahead after our lunch break.

After travelling back down the jeep track, it looked a bit more intimidating, but we were determined, and headed up to the peak, 928 metres above sea level - the highest point in Hout Bay. This climb was a little steeper, and at one point we left the trail to go to the summit, which involved a bit of climbing over huge rocks. The cloud cover had cleared by this point, giving us a magnificent view. Our lunch summit and the surrounding peaks paled in comparison. Unfortunately, we were unpleasantly surprised to hear chainsaws and the buzz of machinery at the top. So much for untouched nature! The way down was again steep at times, but over-all quite nice, and the cloud cover returned to give us a cool hike to the bottom. The area must be amazing with the proteas in bloom, but there is nonetheless something to be said for the contrast between

their blacked skeletons and the green surrounding vegetation, which had grown back after last year's fires.

After a long, hot but quite enjoyable six and a half hours, we returned to our starting point. We made a short stop at the beach to run in and cool down, and then headed home, satisfied with our achievements.

### **BRITNEY LOUIS ICES DAVE'S DEVIL.**

By: Russell Shaw

After donning a pair of plastic boobs and wooing Ben Knights the previous year, Dave Gwyn-Evans had high expectations as the almighty judge for the 2001 event. He was possibly even more excited by the fact that of the seven contenders, three were women!

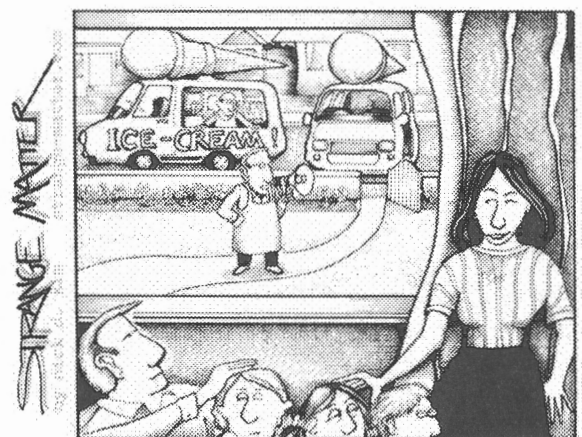
The pampering began as early as the blockhouse, with Bridget serving fresh berry juice accompanied by a tray of Romany Creams. Anita was not far behind, with another refreshing beverage for King Dave at the next stop, together with a wide array of flattering comments, which not many people thought Dave understood. Mike "Stud muffin" Sands, seeing his advantage quickly slipping away, was quick to add some flattering comments of his own, telling Dave how "stunning" he looked whilst constantly offering his services as a full-body masseur!

Everyone was fairly secretive about their planned presentations, although no-one could quite work out why Anita decided to hike up the peak in school uniform. In any event, the smile from Dave's face seldom faded as he contemplated the joys that awaited him on top.

The ascent was fairly slow, putting strain on the

specially prepared delights, which were soon to be discovered in a not-so-solid state. Once we've made the ascent Dave sat himself down upon his 'throne' and awaited the much-anticipated gifts from his loyal subjects.

The variety on offer was quite diverse, ranging from treasures rescued by scuba divers from the depths of the ocean to puddings from the highlands of Scotland to conical devices protruding from the rear of a blow-up sheep. As if the sheep wasn't enough, the subject in question (Ant Kaschula) clothed himself in little more than an afro wig and some pink hippo 'stud' undies. The last laugh of the day undoubtedly went to Ben Knights. After undergoing several months of therapy to recover from Dave's fake bosoms the previous year, he spent several months mixing and matching ingredients before finding a killer combination. After extracting his rock-solid ice cream from its liquid nitrogen container, King Dave was subjected to the dual experience of perfect ice cream followed by the stinging association one could only expect from red-chilli ice cream! Add this to some frozen eggs and bacon, and one can see why Ben wasn't quite able to regain his title, although revenge



"IT'S NO USE PRETENDING YOU'RE OUT, MR AND MRS SMITH. WE KNOW YOU'RE IN THERE, AND WE KNOW YOU HAVE THREE CHILDREN."

was his sole intention for competing.

The winner of this world-famous event was a schoolgirl by the name of Brit-nita, who subjected his royal highness to a striptease reminiscent of *Showgirls*, accompanied with an ice cream and Amarula body shot. Anita followed this up with an exquisite banana split, but Dave's mind was already made up by this stage and not even Bridget's doctor-doctor

attempt could sway his decision.

Well done to Anita, who realised the need to sacrifice her dignity in order to assume the role of the almighty judge in 2002. Gentlemen, start your spading engines for 2002!

- |                        |                           |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> place: | Anita Louis               |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Place: | Some American chick       |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> place: | Russell Shaw & Mike Sands |



## Being

By: Ruth Woudstra

It is the churning of this milk-  
froth spilling, then  
riding over sea;  
this abundant mass displacing itself  
its only desire:  
to be.

The impaling of this rock through skin is  
almost dead as I  
lick from my lips this sea-milk moustache  
and wait for it to dry.



# KRAKADOU

By: Jacek Stankiewicz

Group: me, Ruth, Thorsten, Doug, Russell, Barry, Sebastián, Maryjka, Obi, the spirit of Ben\*.



I've always wanted to go the Cederberg, so I jumped on the opportunity to lead a trip there when Kevin was thinking of what to organize for the long weekend. Originally we decided to go to Crystal Pools and Sneekop, but the only area that wasn't fully booked was Krakadou. So Krakadou it was to be....

The first tricky move was fitting 9 people with 3-day rucksacks, 8 roll-mats (thanks Barry, would have been even worse if you weren't so hardcore) and 3 tents into 2 cars. Somehow we made it to Dwarsriver North and got walking at 11, with Krakadou looming over us. The path followed a steep river gorge, and pretty soon (not soon enough according to Ruth and Thorsten) we found a nice lunch spot. It was then that we noticed the first clouds gathering over the northern horizons. Oh well, nothing we could do, so we ambled on to Krakadoupoot, setting up camp about 500 meters beyond the

saddle, less than a kilometer from an allegedly perennial river. Doug and Russel didn't know what they got themselves into when they volunteered to get water. Pouring with sweat they finally arrived triumphantly with full bottles 2 hours later, after a 5km round trip. So at least we had water to cook with, all we needed was a place to cook. This was taken care of by Barry, who found a place on top of a huge boulder, where we could all sit comfortably, and where the howling wind reduced the stove efficiency to the absolute minimum. The French chef (Sebastián) took centre stage in making something that in France might have passed for a sauce, while the pasta department (me, Russel and Thorsten) decided speed and quantity were the important issues. The night sky was completely clouded, and the wind was howling. Tomorrow was going to be a very interesting summit day.



We woke up to the same weather we went to sleep with. This time, with no volunteers to fetch water for an extra round of tea so we saddled up and off we went. The plan for this day was to bundu-bash around Krakadou, summit from the most gentle side, and then traverse over Cedar and Chisel Peaks to camp in the neck at the foot of Crevasse Peak. After

about 20 minutes I saw a decent looking traverse line for the bundu-bash, so we walked off the path aiming for a plantation at the foot of Krakadou. At noon we came to what was marked a perennial river. This happened to be a series of trickles, but it was flowing water nonetheless. It was now obvious that the water levels were very low, and assuming there will be water at my proposed campsite was very dangerous. Krakadou was still covered in cloud, so I also wasn't sure if I'll be able to find the traverse from the top. We therefore decided to camp where we were, leave our stuff behind and attempt to summit pack-less. It was 1h10, and I announced that if we're not on top by half past 3 we're turning around.

Walking with no pack was a pleasure the pace at which we gained height seemed incredible.

The clouds were still there, but before we reached them the views of the valley that opened up were spectacular. Once in the cloud the going got slower. It got slower still when we reached the rocky summit plateau, and the path was replaced by cairns, which were invisible in the mist. The passing clouds gave the already freaky rock formations a very eerie touch. "God's bowling alley" somebody commented. Going through a chimney Thorsten hurt his ankle, and decided to go down it and wait for us at its bottom in case his foot became swollen. I was not happy leaving him behind, but decided to trust his experience from hiking in the Alps. It was 3h10, so we were going to be coming back soon one way or another. The next 10 minutes were spent looking for a cairn, running to it, looking for the next one, running to that



one... Realizing that we were beginning to see every loose rock as a cairn, combined with the knowledge that the slightest deviation from our route on the way down can make us miss Thorsten, left me with only one thing to do. I



gathered everybody, and managed to mumble 'mission aborted'. Then the mist cleared just a little bit, but enough for Doug to point out the summit beacon not 50 meters from where we stood. I ran to it like a 6 year old to a Christmas Tree and kissed it on arrival. The mist was still around, but it was thin enough for us to get freaked out by the 400m drop on the other side. A few minutes of appreciating the moment, we headed down to the camp where tea and food waited. I put myself in charge of the food, and once again went for speed, but paying some attention to quality after last night's pasta incident. The weather improved a lot, as did everybody's spirits after a truly awesome day, so we stayed up late playing all sorts of word games.

I wanted an early start on Sunday, but that hadn't happened. Not being able to find the bag for the club tent, I asked everybody to check their rucksacks. After half an hour the bag was found under Barry's rucksack. This settled the

'most stupid behaviour of the weekend' award (wearing a tattoo from a marshmallow bag on one's forehead) he would have got it anyway after genuinely asking for an explanation to the world famous Irish game of noughts-and-circles. There were suggestions of making Barry carry the tent poles all the way back to the cars to crucify him on them, but we managed to laugh everything off and get moving. As the second day was changed from the original plan, we had to go back to Krakadoupoot, and then go back the way we came. This went fairly quickly, so we were able to afford ourselves a nice long lunch by the river. It was quite warm, so some braved the icy waters and went for a swim. Once we got back to the cars, we looked back at Krakadou. All 1745 meters of it, towering over us, still there, unchanged.



The adventure didn't end there. After stuffing the entire luggage into the cars, Ruth noticed she has a flat tire. Doh! After making sure we're OK Russell's group sped off to Cape Town, while Ruth's party followed at a more relaxed pace, even stopping in Malmesbury for a snack.

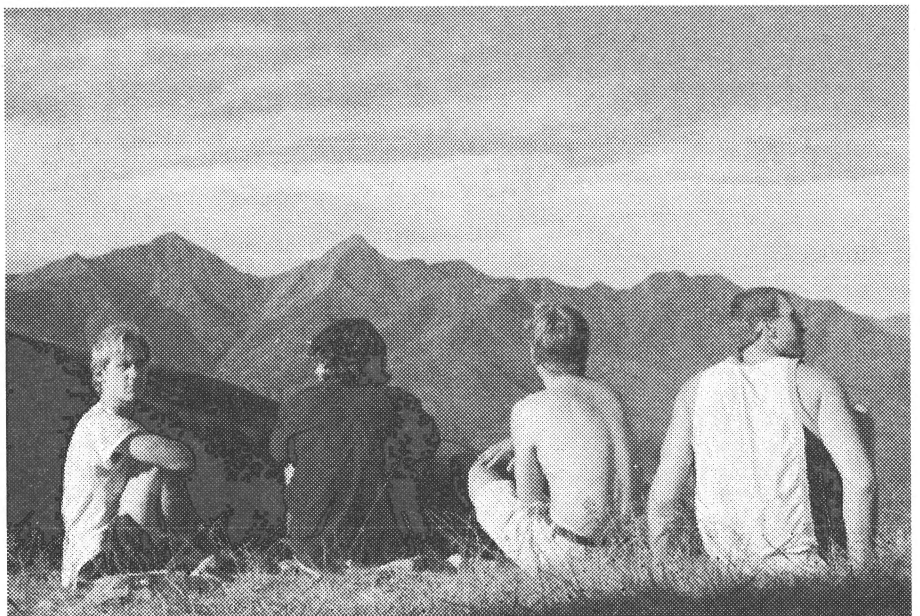
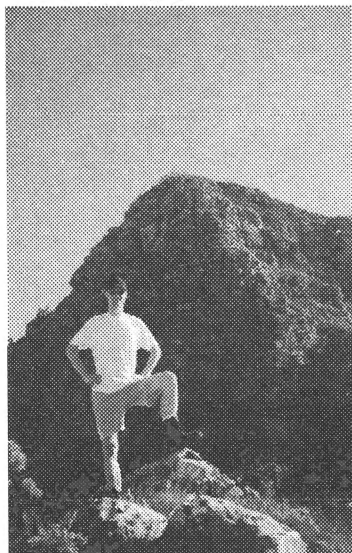
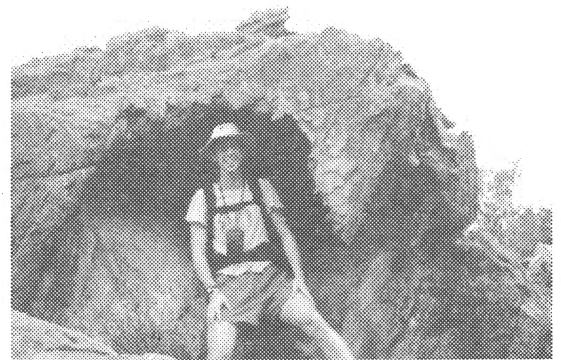
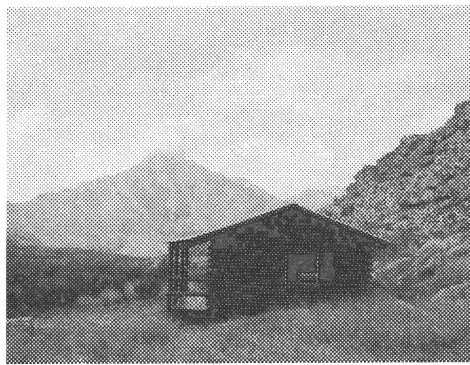
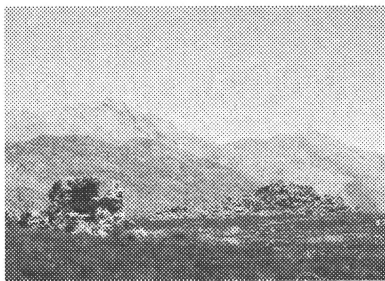
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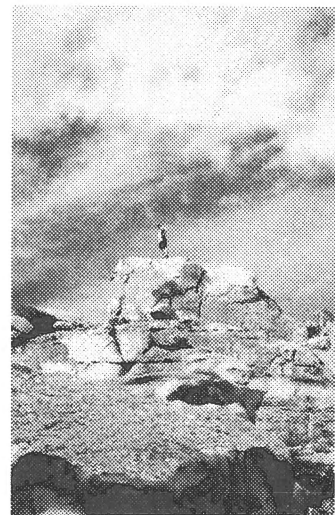
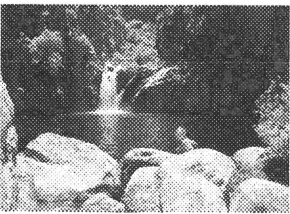
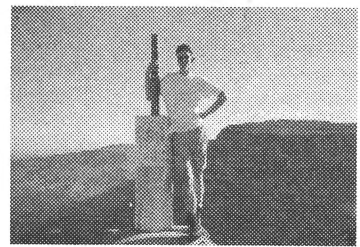
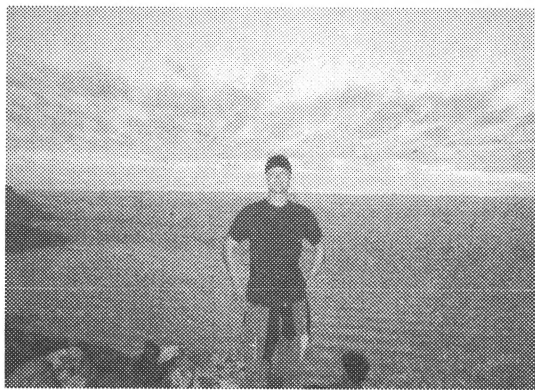
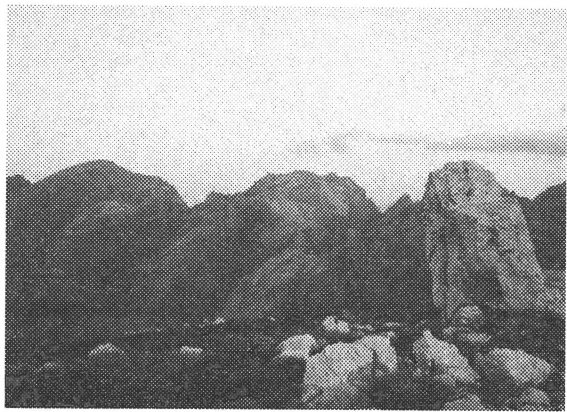
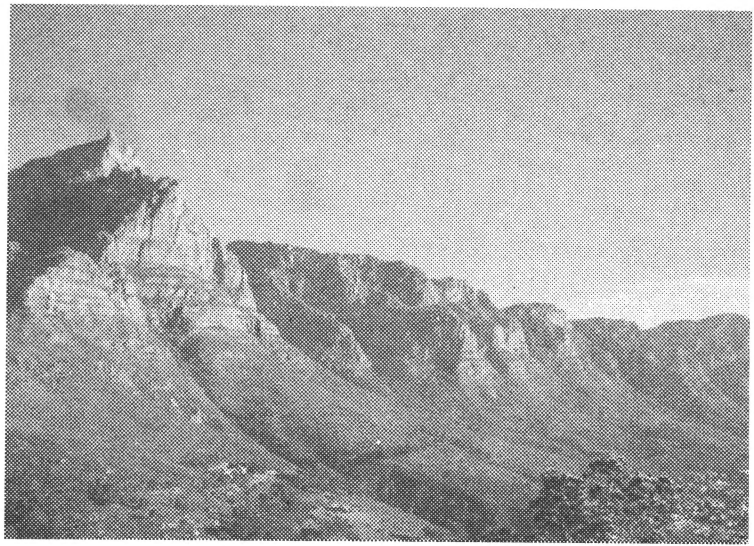
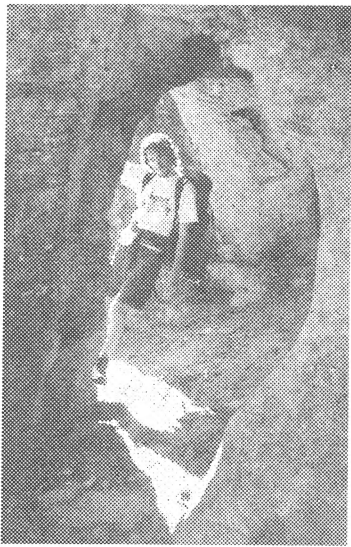
\* designated co-leader went down with flu.













# June/July Holiday

## SWELLENDAM TRAIL

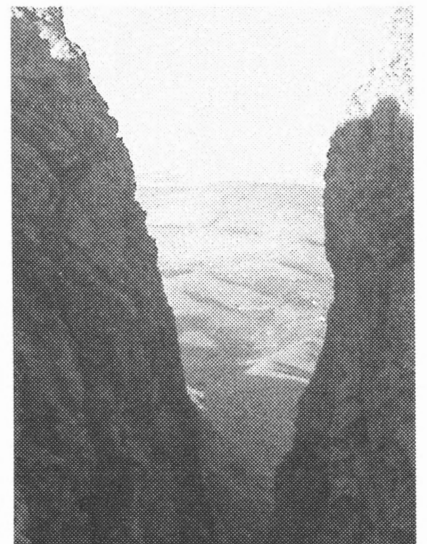
By: Britta Dedekind

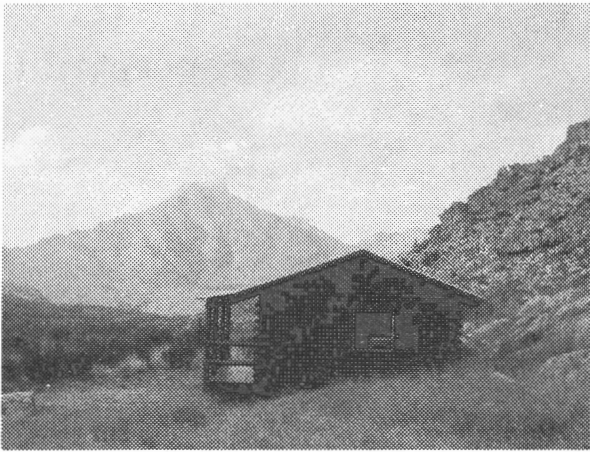


In the still of the morning, a small group of hiking enthusiasts gathered in the info centre parking lot, anticipating a good distance to be travelled before their adventure could begin. Ever-imaginative Adri thought that a good way to start off would be a game, which required much concentration and co-ordination and involved linking arms and hand tapping - this soon revealed who was really awake. The hiking enthusiasts then set off towards the rising sun, oblivious to what the day would bring. The majority of us dozed off as soon as the wheels began to roll silently through the valleys towards the majestic mountains.

Once in Swellendam there was some confusion as to where to go from there. After circling the town a few times, we found the dusty road leading to Marloth nature reserve. Parking in the shade of the trees, everyone checked the finer details of their backpacks, and Adri began the lengthy procedure of packing. With the group photo taken, we finally set off with the sun blazing above. Our task was to cover 10 km to our evening's destination, or so we thought. Although the route was not tough, it took much energy. The backpacks were rather heavy as there was extra cargo for the fresh healthy meals planned in certain cooking groups, which required ingredients such as butternut. Another factor was the heat, which was relieved by a swim in an icy stream. After a satisfying lunch with much competition as to who ate the best, we continued up the final slope towards Tienuurkop. On reaching the top we were certain the hut was near but then when the 10km

turned to 12. Some became disillusioned, especially Laura, our blonde American companion from Florida, where there are no hills. I was too preoccupied by the enchanting view. There were no signs of human





habitation and the surrounding valley was strewn with bright pink and yellow flowers, and the occasional butterfly flitting about. Soon the 12km became 14, and after crossing the river the hut still seemed no nearer. Only a little further was one met by the sign marking Boskloof off to the left, after a considerable water break at the 14km mark. The hut was met with much relief and soon everyone was in their evening attire, reclining on the verandah and preparing the evenings meal before heading off to bed: too tired to socialize.

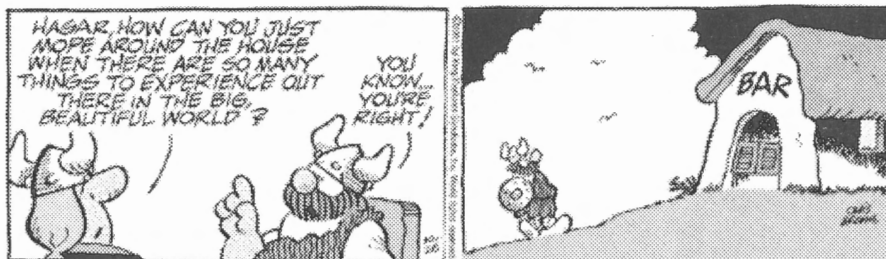
Next morning we woke to what would become the trend for the next few days. Come 7 o'clock, Adri would burst into song, which would be answered with much moaning from those content to remain in their warm sleeping bags. There was slight cloud cover with a light breeze, making it very easy to walk over flat terrain and then an easy slope down to Goedgeloof. The showering facilities, although icy, were greatly welcomed by most. Thereafter mattresses were pulled out of the numerous little huts to a communal area for the start of a long evening of asshole. Russell and Gareth where quite determined to stay at the top of the hierarchy, although Britta and Maryjka gave them stiff competition from the women's side.

And then there was Andy, almost the permanent asshole, taking it all with a smile.

Sun rise into cloud - disappearing for a while only to scorch the earth a little later. We walked over streams and rocks toward the killer ascent, met with panting breath and parched lips. Once at the top the view was amazing, all 360-degrees of it. As we headed down into the valley, Misty Point showed her fair face. Sadly Proteavallei was mere skeletons of charcoal with long grass, lost a few years ago to a large fire. The afternoon was spent lazing in the sun and a little later expeditions set off in various directions to climb the surrounding peaks, the horizon always being a little further than one expected. Our party headed towards Kleinboshoogte to a height of 1365m, to be met by a pair of black eagles lazily circling round high above our heads then down into the valley. The evening was spent discussing ideas on what an ideal woman was composed of. Adri caused quite a stir - "take Natalie Portman and combine her with Jock of the bushveld." (Is that because she won't be able to talk back to you?! - Ed) Animal lovers take note - your actions are illegal.

Next morning the group was divided to accommodate Andrea's injury the previous day. Some would proceed over the easier side of the mountain, while we took the more demanding route, both physically and mentally. Having to descend 1000m over a few kilometres with gale force winds was quite exhilarating, with winds forcing their way through and down into the Kloof. Sliding along the ridge, clinging to rocks uprooted by the shear strength of the howling





## STRANDLOPER TRAIL

By: Russell Shaw

wind, we were close to flying, feet no longer placed on solid ground, all words that were spoken got lost in the gale. The hut was reached with much excitement and anticipation of the disbelief our tale would be met with, but the buzz subsided after bathing in the nearby stream. Seating arrangements were much fought over, everybody wanting to be as close to the campfire as possible. Once settled we proceeded into the night with asshe and laughter.

With the final day's walking the cold front arrived. The waterproofing abilities of our equipment would now be tested to their limitations. Criteria were made as to what the best slipping had to incorporate. Then we set off through the plantation, getting to the cars thoroughly drenched, to eat our last meal before we set off in our different directions, with fond memories firmly embedded in our minds.



The crew: Kevin Iles, Richard Milne, Russell Shaw, David Kornik, Douglas Hildebrand, Lauren Mandy, Sonja Pasche, Romy Matthes, Ruth Woudstra, Howard Smith, Samora Adams.



July vacation meets are generally notorious for their hard-core status. Other hikes hosted during the vacation included a trip up the steep slopes of Swellendam, and two trips to the harsh, freezing-cold Drakensberg. So it was a pleasant surprise to learn that the fourth option, the Strandloper Trail, allowed hikers to barely raise a sweat! Far from cowering inside tents with arctic gales outside and living off oat-so-queasy and tuna pasta, this exclusive group had the pleasure of sleeping in well-equipped huts and dining in some of the Wild Coast's finest restaurants. But let me not wet your appetite any further...

The UCT entourage left Cape Town before sunrise in the hope of conquering the fairly



lengthy 1100km trip to East London as soon as possible. Whilst the passengers

snoozed and caught up on their lack of sleep after getting up so early, the drivers focused their collective energies on making it to Grahamstown in time to see the end of the arts festival.

After reaching East London with all four cars still intact, everyone had an early night after a few games of pool against the local hustlers. The remaining leg of the journey to Kei Mouth took some time the following morning, with a car being left in Gonubie. This was after our leader Kevin managed to convince the local police station that he wasn't put off by their claim that his car may be hit by stray bullets: "in the event that we have to chase down an escaped convict!"

The 85km road to Kei Mouth could be best described as being fit to host an international motor cross competition. The drivers were constantly looking out for rocks and potholes in the road, as well as for the occasional stray sheep. Nonetheless we were greeted at our destination by the friendly trail manager, who proceeded to sit us all down and give us an



introduction to the trail as well as several do's and don'ts. Having just

finished exams nobody could remember a thing he said, but we bade him farewell promising to take everything he said to heart. Finally, the Strandloper trail could get under way!

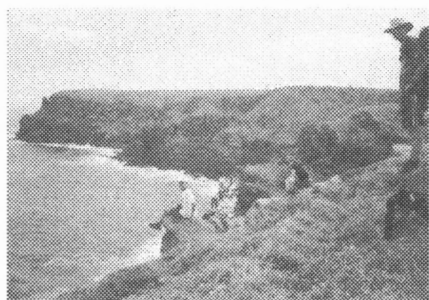
This five-day stroll along the beach spanned roughly 50km along the pristine Transkei coastline. Whilst most of the 'hiking' was done along the sandy or rocky beach, the path occasionally drifted off into the nearby forest or along the occasional cliff. The maximum height attained throughout the five days was a mere 87m! Nonetheless we were treated to some beautiful fauna and flora, seeing a variety of birds and sea life together with some interesting trees.

One of the undoubted highlights of the trip, however, was our overnight stops. On the first day we were accommodated in an old pump-house, situated only metres from the breaking waves. At Double Mouth at the end of day two we enjoyed sleeping on the verandah of a fantastic log cabin overlooking the ocean. The huts for the remainder of the trip were never far from the beach. To illustrate just how lucky we were, here is a list of items you should never be able to take for granted on a hike:

- Fresh water reservoirs at each stop
- Warm Showers
- Shops en route
- Four star restaurants

Admittedly it was really difficult forcing oneself to hike after consuming a David and Goliath burger at the Morgan Bay Hotel, but somehow we coped!

The trickiest sections of the hike were the river-crossings. This coastline is peppered with rivers, some of which flow incredibly fast and change from being two feet deep to 12 feet deep in one step, as Richard found out on more than one occasion! However all eleven of us safely negotiated our way across each challenge, only Sonja managing to slip *before* actually getting



into the water!

As we made our way past Cinsa on

day four, we finally found some sand dunes worth running up. Having carried some cardboard boxes scavenged from a hotel two days previously, Richard and myself were keen to launch face-first down the sizeable dunes. However, these boxes were made for carrying wine, and soon buckled under the inconsiderable weight. A solution was found to the 'problem' by eventually lying someone down on a survival bag, with another hiker sprinting down the dune with the dune-boarder in tow. This was good fun for a while, but the steep dunes soon sapped all our strength, and after getting caked in sand from head to toe, most of us were ready to move on.

The final evening was spent on the roof of our hut in Cape Henderson, the others avoiding vertigo by sleeping indoor. After negotiating our way past the final river crossing, we reached Gonubie and settled down at the nearest pub for the rest of the afternoon while the drivers did the arduous task of retrieving the other three cars from Kei Mouth. A fines meeting was instigated

that night, with not a single member of the party escaping punishment for some daft comment or action during the trail.

Keen to go out on a high, a few of us ventured into the local hotspot - Numbers - to show the locals what UCT students were all about. We danced and sang until they wouldn't allow us to dance and sing anymore, and at around four o'clock the weary hikers made their way back to the Backpackers for a few hours sleep before the long drive home.

It was a truly awesome hike, and while not too many peaks were conquered, everyone made new friendships and reveled in each other's company the primary objective of a meet such as this!

## SWAZILAND



Sam Becker and Jacek Something-or-another

How did we get there? After the Drakensberg hike, we hit the road up to Oshoek border post. What do you need? Passport, lots of sunscreen and warm clothes for cold winter nights.

We both had no expectations of Swaziland, except for the fact that it was supposedly in a state of emergency. After dealing with very

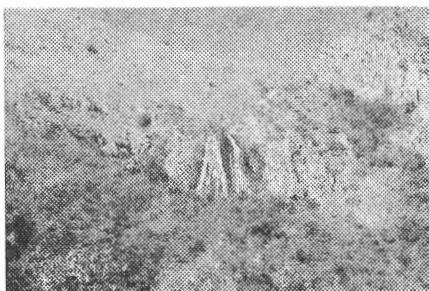
efficient people at the border post, we entered into a busy construction site. They were building a new road leading into the capital city of Mbabane.

As we dodged rubble-laden trucks, we arrived in the city situated amidst beautiful green roly-poly hills. After getting lost trying to find Wendy's backpackers, we were stopped driving up a one way down street by a very friendly Swazi police officer, who swore that if we camped anywhere in the city, Jacek would be killed and "Jacek's wife" would be raped by Mozambicans. These good tidings prompted us to drive to the Malolotja Nature Reserve where we spent the rest of our week.

The reserve is the largest in Swaziland, bordering South Africa. It is very mountainous, the rolling, grassy hills teeming with game. The main campsite is very clean and comfortable.

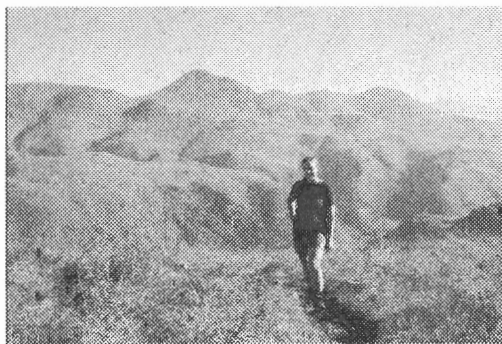
We decided on our first day to complete a series of day walks. Firstly, all trails start at one of the 4 viewpoints at the far ends of game drives, where cars cannot be parked overnight. Thus each trail would start with a good few Kms walk to your actual starting point. Secondly, we wanted to see as much of the reserve as possible by driving to a different starting point each day.

#### **Day one: Logwaja to Malolotja falls.**



The reserve houses rare bald ibis, which nest above the falls at this time of the

year, so, not wanting to disturb the birds, we opted to walk below the falls. The trails seemed clear and marked with big cairns, but the further away you are from the viewpoints, the more ill defined paths and cairns become. We descended into the gorge, and saw impressive three-tiered falls and eventually the Malolotja falls, which from a distance looks like a very large white bird dropping amidst the forest foliage. The water was extremely cold so despite the mid-day heat we just lazed around and ate loads of sandwiches. Whilst ascending the gorge we heard whistling noises; we looked above and saw beautiful crowned hornbills.



#### **Day two: Ngwenya peak (1837m)**

This was the longest day - 25 Kms of walking from Ngwenya viewpoint, up to Ngwenya peak, across Jasper peak and over to Logwaja Viewpoint.

The path up to the peak (the highest point in the reserve, and second highest mountain in Swaziland) was not very steep, but seemed to go on forever. Once on the summit ridge, however, all pain was forgotten when we were presented with a stunning 360-degree view of the reserve, Mbabane and hills all the way into South Africa. Instead of turning back we decided to do a circular walk through a river valley to the north. The path at this point looked impossible to distinguish from trails left by herds of blesbok



and wildebeest that were running away from us. We got lost, and it was frustrating, considering that the booklet describes a very well defined path. We even walked past a few rivers which did not exist, as they were not recorded on the map. After a lot of time bundu bashing through long grass and piercing thorns, a Malolotja River tributary made a very pleasant rest and recovery spot, where an attempted swim cheered us up considerably. Later we saw even more game, including warthogs and a duiker, before finally emerging at the car park.

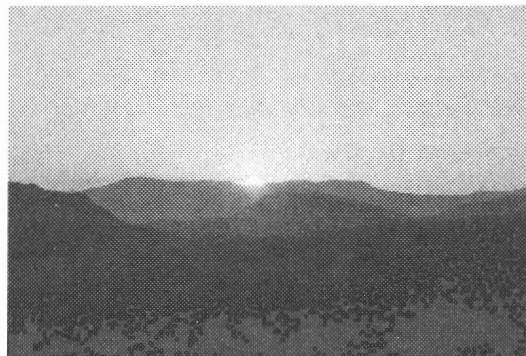
### Day three: Nkomati river



This was a very beautiful walk to the almighty Nkomati River,

which turned out to be even huger and gushier than any map could represent. Next to the river was an amazing lush forest with hanging vines and strange flowers, some of which I recognised as those, which can be seen lovingly grown in old ladies' gardens. There are supposedly a few elephants that cross the SA border from time to time, and also the very illusive eland, neither of which to my disappointment showed up. We were, however, graced by the presence of a zebra, which walked away from us the whole way back and a pair of shy oribis. After a scrumptious lunch of provitas, syrup and peanut butter (again...sigh) we walked back up, and ventured into Mbabane to buy some local art and craft.

Where were the rampaging, raping Mozambicans so distinctively described by our jolly Swazi policeman? We didn't see any, although at first we tried. Maybe they lurk

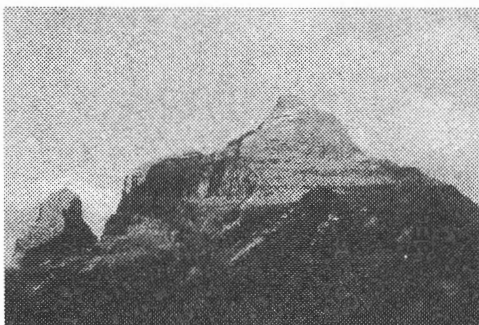
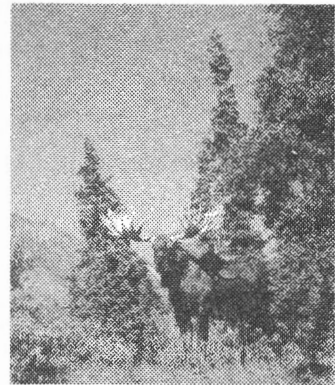
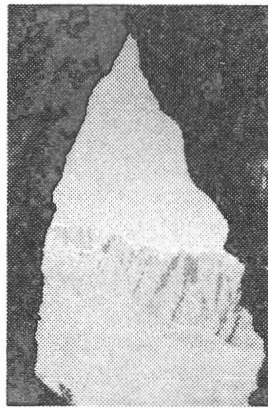
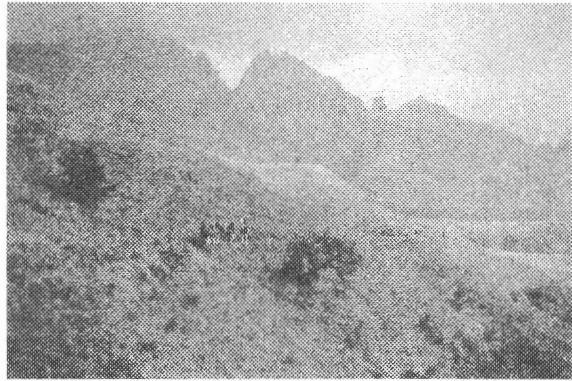
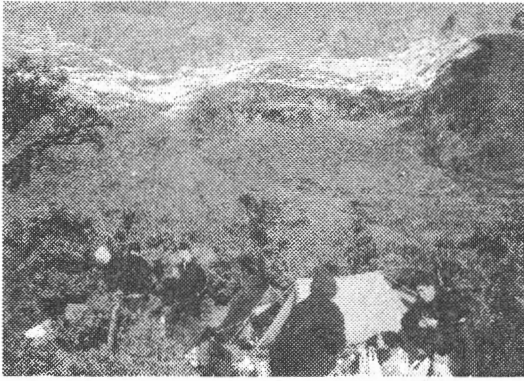


somewhere amongst the collective Swazi consciousness. The city is very small and the people are so friendly. We must have stuck out like sore thumbs because school children came running up to us asking for donations, and at the market we were offered best prices (yes, right) for all sorts of interesting things. Convinced that it was rude for women to wear shorts, Sam wore long skirts probably the reason why she was often referred to as being Jacek's wife. We did not get harassed by anyone and on the whole we felt very welcome.

In retrospective, we left Swaziland longing to come back next year, feeling that exploring the eight or nine game reserves they have offer some of the most spectacular, rare, exotic nature, beautiful scenery and friendly, helpful people.

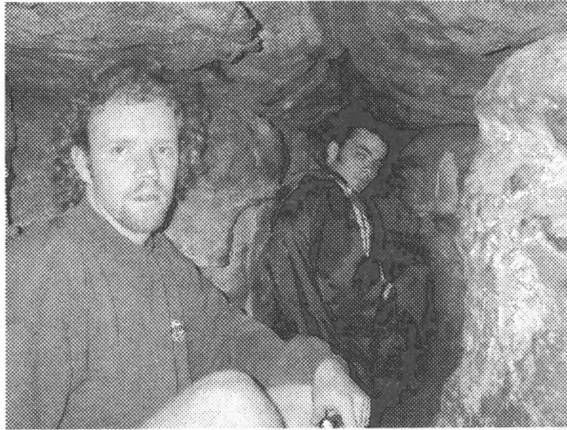


# DRAKENSBERG



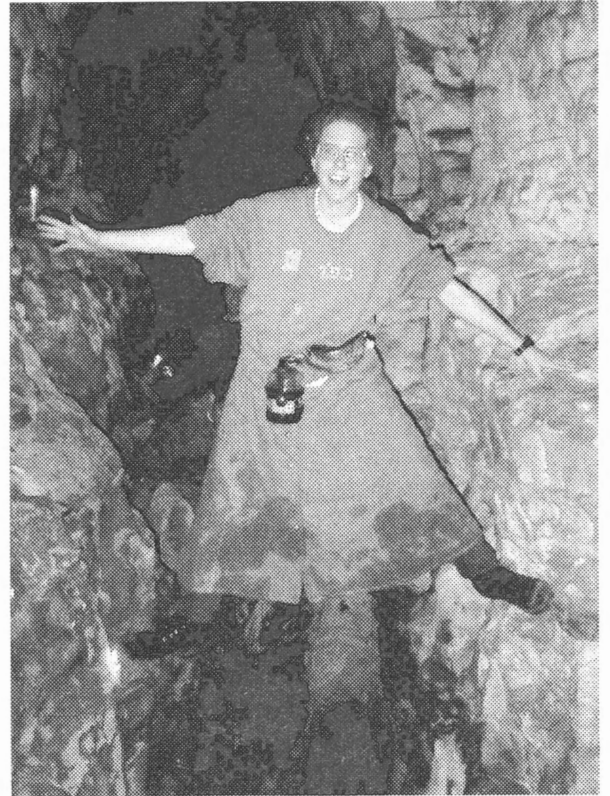
There remains no evidence Ben ever got us lost ....

# CAVING

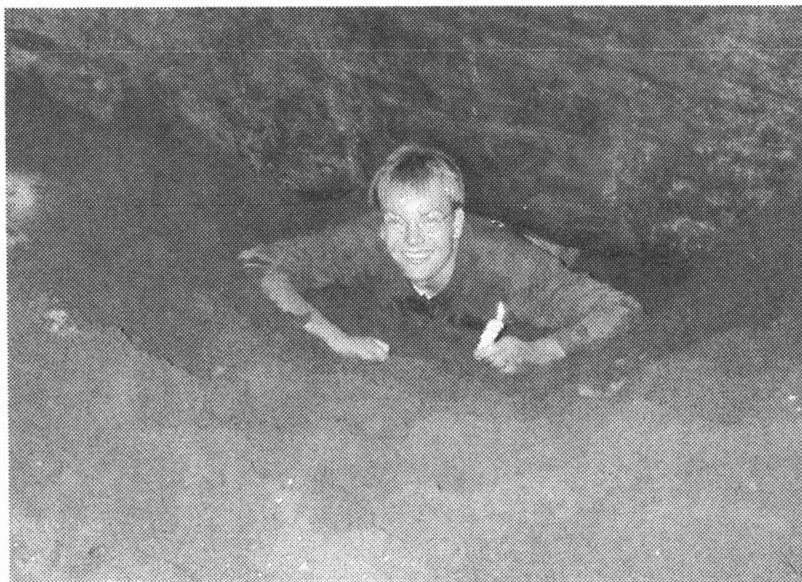


By Thorsten Schulz

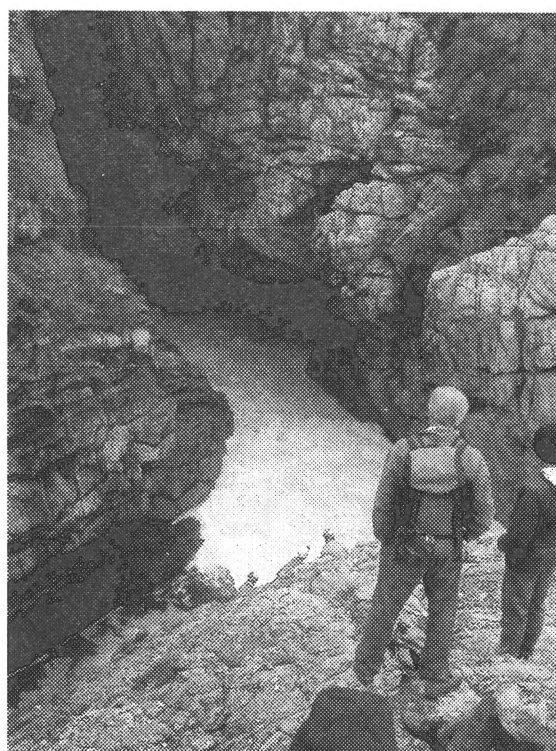
At some very beautiful day in spring a couple of very weird people decided to hide themselves in dark holes beneath the earth's surface. The entrance already looked like Hell's gate, only the reddish colour of the lava was not visible - yet. Squeezed together like chickens in a cage, the group wandered along and crawled deeper and deeper into the apparently never-ending tunnel system. Only the torches paved the way until, suddenly, the group heard a dreadful



roaring behind them! Obviously they went to far. They woke up the obnoxious, ferocious and flesh eating white rabbit. Yes, the white rabbit. So, the question is: How was the group able to escape this fearful threat? Well, the mighty warriors did not escape, of course. They turned around, slaughtered the rabbit right away and had a very nice braai outside while watching a beautiful sunset.









# ZUURBERG

## Witels in November 2000

By: Ruthless Woudstra

GROUP: Leader: Annabelle Louis, Christina "Poodle" Jongens, Neil "Syril" Snair, Guy "Long-sleeves" Richards, Kerry "Bruised One" Botha, Jessica "Artiste" Katz, Ben "The Rotweiler" Knights and Ruth "The 'Dresser" Woudstra.



It was a melting pot of students who joined our Witels group for a chilled weekend at Hoare Hut. When I say *chilled*, I mean we were so relaxed we had adventures being read to us in bed at midday, instead of finding our own. We

were joined by the Medics (who predictably only conversed about medicine) and the Extras, who felt very much rejected by the title but who nonetheless provided great entertainment: how else would it be with Mark "Please Pose For Me" Johnson? Keen-Been Andy started the story-telling initiative and we each got a turn to read a story or part thereof until the end of the Witels. JD Salinger's "" was taken down the riva and "it near killed us," we were so addicted to the reading. We came "damn near" to finishing it, but *just* didn't make the cut. What is there to say about the Witels? Nothing that shouldn't be experienced by every person on this planet! It is

a stroll next to the river, a dip in the icy yet pristine pools, a climb up a mossy waterfall, and a traverse across a pool, the push and a shove of a waterproofed backpack (thanks to Prof Jongens for the 30 year old Witels lilo, we would have been lost without the *Pink Wonder!*). SCRAP - Soaked Chocolate, Raisins and Peanuts, a quarter cup of rice: I mean muesli for breakfast...and loads of onions for dinner - a dozen and a half to be exact were enjoyed by us Elsies.

Night numba 4 proved to be the most exciting. After one helluva long day, we carried on walking after dark and felt unimpressed at DJ when he mentioned still having to cross one pool. Luckily, Camp Cobra saved the day. This previously disadvantaged four-man camping spot was soon transformed into an eight-man pad, and it turned out to be the most beautiful night of all as the stars serenaded our fast-fading wakefulness.

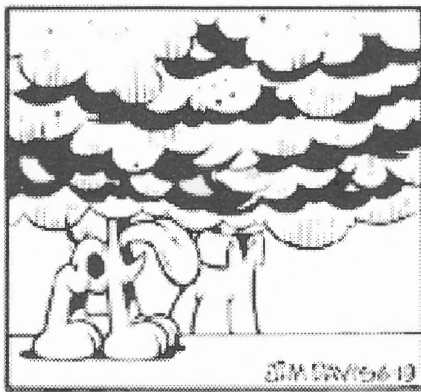
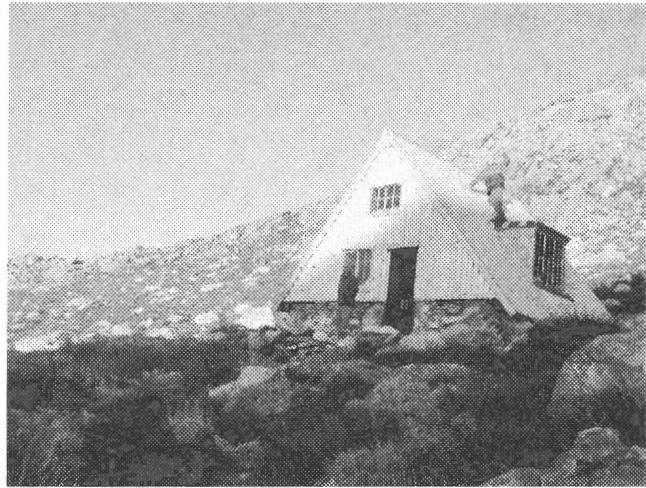
The last day consisted of the walk out, one last dip, and a full-on camera session: one needs to get those wounds when they are still fresh, otherwise the stories just don't have any substance! But the adventure was far from over. Walking towards Guy's yellow Golf was an interesting experience. Trying to imagine a car when it is not there and whispering to fellow hikers to confirm your own level of sanity is an adventure on its own. But then, as if they were called, the police arrived and informed us that Guy's tyres had been stolen and the car towed to the parents in Paarl.

The Ceres Police were kind enough to give Annabelle and others a lift to the bottom of the

Waaihoek road, and as the rest of us waited, we read some more and trimmed Guy's beard, which had grown immensely since his-cut two days before.

Exhausted, we arrived at home late that evening.

Moral of the story: make buddies with the folk at the Mill & Oak, and avoid highway donations!



### What people had to say about the Hut's 30<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party:

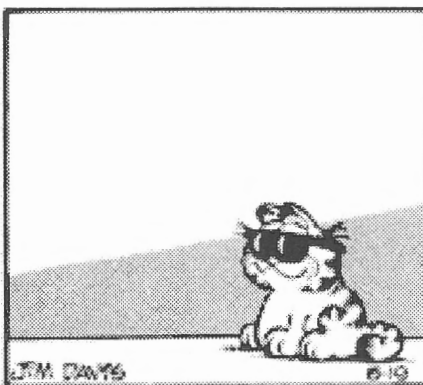
"Great party, great place, pity about the people, though - only jokes!" Paul Leroy

"Over 20 years and 50-odd ascents. It's great to see that the spirit remains the same. Thanks to the 2001 Committee for organizing." Leon van Heerden

"Good Grief! My name isn't in this book yet!" Rob Isydel

"A great event. Good to see the Hut looking so well at 30 and also the spirit keeps going. Keep it up and thanks." Brian de Villiers (53 years and maybe ascents)

"In total there were 46 of us here for a huge party." Kobus Coetzee (59)



## Mount Superior

By: Jacek Stankiewicz

Group: Jacek, Samantha, Chris and Baz.

This was going to be a lazy, late afternoon ascent to Hoare Hut, leaving immediately after Sam's crit in Michaelis on Friday afternoon, some time between 3pm and 4. Unfortunately we forgot the artistic alphabet is different to the conventional one, with 'Becker' being the last name on the class list. So at precisely 6 in the afternoon we left Cape Town and sped off to Waaihoek. On the other side of the tunnel we were greeted by a huge mass of clouds - things were getting more and more interesting, and as we got walking at 7h30, in the dark, thick mist was reducing visibility to ~2m. In these



conditions, I was not very confident about leading my first night ascent.

At Agony Rock we realized something was wrong. We could see stars and the full moon. We looked around - what a sight that was: an ocean of clouds stretching everywhere below us, not a cloud above us. Next time some idiot asks me why I like hiking, this picture will immediately come to my mind.

The rest of the day (night?) was fairly uneventful, except for the sounds of Rastus

choking over the copious leftover soya/rice sticky combo supper - this was the only noise breaking the perfect silence for us tired lot. The next morning we walked back to Pell's hut, where we dropped our packs and set out to meet the objective of this trip: Mt. Superior, on the southern tip of Zuurberg. At first we followed a faint path from the Croquet Green, but after about half an hour it changed direction and we opted for bundu bashing. We walked past some amazing gorges of Witels tributaries, and then the whole of our river came into view, stretching far into the north. Our summit was close now, and an



easy scramble took us to the top (of Pyramid Peak, due to a slight navigational error, but who cares?), where we were presented with an amazing view of rugged peaks sticking out from the low-lying clouds. We all agreed that we mustn't neglect the rest of this spectacular mountain range by just going to Hoare Hut 4623914 times.

We'll be back to bag them all.

## The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Waaihoek Race

By: Russell Shaw

29<sup>th</sup> September - five contestants and a few supporters lined themselves up at the foot of the mountain for the start of the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Waaihoek Challenge. To the unaccustomed, this is an event where aches, pains and common sense are tossed aside with the aim of getting to

Hoare Hutt in the shortest time possible. Before starting, our packs were thoroughly checked by race marshal Kerry to ensure they weighed the required 15% of our body mass. Not surprisingly some competitors had underestimated their pack weights, and large rocks were found as healthy additions to their load.

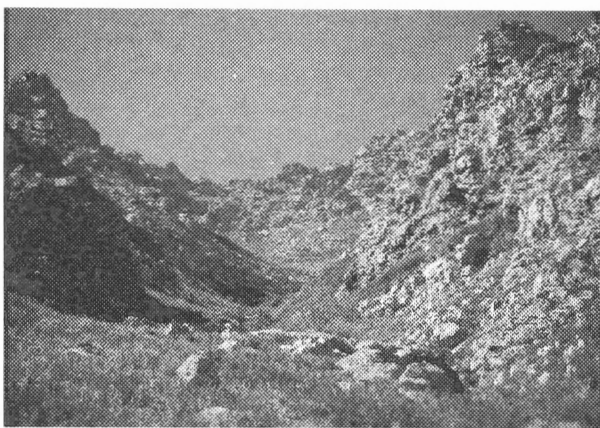
The race began at 11:00 sharp, with race conditions at their optimum. There was not a cloud in the sky, and it felt like 32° in the shade, although it is amazing how quickly one feels hot and bothered when carrying 14kg! Richard decided that the best way to approach the initial section was to jog, which left the rest of us panting in his wake. We thought this was the sign that he was taking no prisoners from the outset, but Will soon rose to the challenge and cruised past the rest of us in hot pursuit.

This was pretty much the last the rest of us saw of Richard and Will, as after Base Hut they seemed to melt into the mountain and remained no more than dots on the landscape from my viewpoint a few hundred metres below. Dirk and Clive seemed to match each other step for step, while I seemed to invest some time in seeking out an alternative route, which cost some time and allowed one of the female supporters to overtake me - much to my hidden embarrassment.

The key to doing well in this race is to get into a rhythm and not try to go too fast from the outset. When broken down into sections, such as Little Agony or Grassy Triangle, the ascent seems far more achievable, but the last stretch between point high and Hoare Hutt cannot be underestimated, as at this stage the calves feel like they might fall off at any stage and your

heart is pounding.

Nonetheless, Will cruised home in a scorching time of 1:22:17, just seven minutes off Ianni Vamvadelis' record. He managed to negotiate the ascent with great speed and dexterity, even though two spectators/marshals/idiots tried to sabotage his efforts by offering him peach schnapps disguised as "water" at Point High! Richard came home less than ten minutes later,



and Dirk narrowly edged out Clive for third place. Thankfully (for me), the female spectator somehow ventured off the path near the top and ended up miles from Point High, allowing me to sneak home in fifth place. An impressive aspect of the race this year was the fact that all competitors finished in less than two hours, a very noteworthy feat.

After basking in the sun and then taking a dip in a freezing-cold stream, competitors and spectators alike enjoyed a few cold ones and a bottle of champagne before settling down for some lunch. After a brief afternoon nap, we all had to get the smelly socks back on again to start the descent. It is absolutely amazing how easy the trip seems when you are going downhill!

Everyone got down with time to spare, and some managed to make it to a lovely little pub along Bain's Kloof pass for sundowners as the sun faded behind the mountains.



Spectators: Barry Steyn, Nina van Vlaanderen, Kerry Botha, Dave Acott, Gavin Greenwood, Ben Knights.

### The Roll of Honour

1. Will Robinson	1:22:17
2. Richard Milne	1:31:23
3. Dirk van Vlaanderen	1:45:55
4. Clive Robertson	1:48:23
5. Russell Shaw	1:57:25

### **Half the Witels in a Day**

By: Kevin Iles

It all began quite innocently. It was a night during exams and I was focused on working out who was going to inherit in a very large, very inbred family after a rich uncle died: (ah, the life of law!) when Colette phoned for some advice about the Witels. In a nutshell Gavin's trip was leaving on Wednesday and she was doing an exam on Thursday morning. Now as everyone knows, getting onto a Witels trip is a regular bun-fight, and typically there were no places I



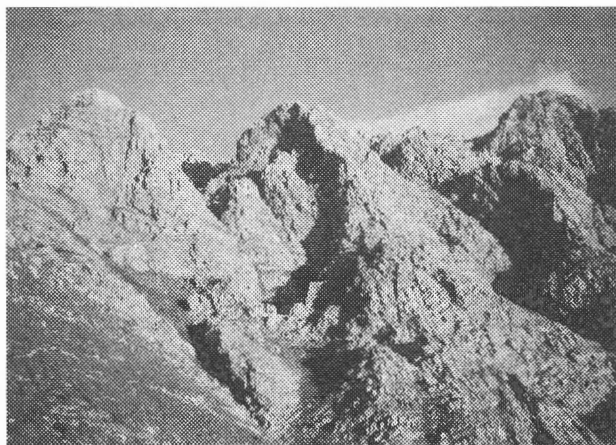
could offer her for love or for money on any other club trip. "You could put your name down as twelfth reserve..." I ventured. Later came the statement that, if ever quoted

in court I would attribute to temporary insanity or hypoglycaemia: "I can hike you in on Thursday to meet Gavin", I said. It sounded like a brilliant scheme at the time. Exams on Wednesday, leave early Thursday and hike up and over to Disa camp, stay the night and then hike out on Friday.

Anita agreed to join me as we had both hiked into Disa in a day before on a Witels trip with Wolraad and knew that it was very do-able. The hike out back up Happy Hill was not appealing in the least and Anita was very keen for the down-stream option - doing four swims and exiting at Adderley. The logistics of this scheme just didn't work out and when I picked up Colette at 09:30 on Thursday morning I had mentally reconciled myself to a trek up Happy Hill. From varsity we drove to Richard's house where we had the usual delays and then it was on to Anita's where we were delayed further by a trampoline and various scrambles for pieces of equipment. A snap decision was made to take Richard's bakkie as well as my car and revert to the Adderley street plan. So after Anita had grabbed some black bags for waterproofing it was back to Richard's house again. I had by this time begun to mutter increasingly frequently, my sentences almost always containing the words: "Happy Hill in the dark, new moon" and optimistically "maybe we can do the ascent in only two hours".

The drive out there was debilitating from the heat. My car struggled breathlessly the entire length of the N1 and almost redlined on the temperature gauge several times. So on a day that must have been at least 30C we jaunted along with my heater on full blast trying to keep the engine cool. If that sounds illogical you're not meant to be an engineer. Colette

commendably never even uttered a murmur, but between us we must have consumed about 1 litre of water each, which left precious little for the car when it finally boiled over just after Rawsonville. I found a spare litre in my boot and somehow managed to remove the radiator cap without permanently scaring the upper half of my body. We were soon on our way again, getting to Bergsig to meet up with Anita and Richard at about midday, and finally we were off to Ceres. Progress was good across Kweperfontein, barring some very impressive and near out-of-control gravel skids on a sharp corner by Richard that left Anita with a fuller sense of how precious life really is. Apparently she also uttered no word of complaint - brave girls these. Just short of the field, however, my



car got stuck in a riverbed owing to some singularly unimpressive driving on my part. With Anita behind the wheel and the rest of us pushing we soon had it out and abandoned it under some nearby trees. Finally, at 15:00 completely heat-fatigued and with empty bottles we were ready for our 8½km mission to Disa camp.

The heat made the ascent up Waaihoek a taxing one and it was a long and arduous four hours before we stood at Point Hi with less than one hour of daylight left and 4½km to go. The heat

was bad and I must have drunk about 6 litres on the ascent to avoid dehydrating. I could feel my skin cells clumping into carcinomas. Richard had been telling us at the parking lot about his first aid course and how to use Sparkles as suppositories to treat hypoglycaemia, and I think that the thought of Richard administering jelly-babies up our posteriors (the closest thing we had to Sparkles) was enough to keep all of us going for hours. Thankfully everyone was fit and able, and reached the top in good spirits and ready to push on, although it must be said that Richard was heard to be muttering about Hoare Hut and bottles of sherry.

We headed off along the path and were at the top of Manhattan just after sunset, watching a klipspringer nosing amongst the rocks close by. The decision had to be made either camp on the Croquet Green or commit to Happy Hill in the dark. Thinking of how far we had to go the next day I decided to commit and I like to think the group was with me on that decision, although again it must be said that for a long time afterwards Richard kept saying "I have two words for you - Croquet Green." We must have descended about 500m down Happy Hill when we called a halt to give ourselves a chance to rest. It was pitch black with no moon at all but a beautiful sky, some light mist over the high peaks and soft wind up from the Kloof below. I was reclining against my rucksack listening to the others chatter when I heard Anita say she was cold. I looked over and she was lying completely flat in the path. Instantly the decision was made - we were camping right there, right now: dry campsite or not.

Richard and I roamed about and found a semi-decent spot on the steep slope where the rocks were sparse enough for a sleeping person to

have only about four jabbing into your back at any one time. Water was rationed, Richard fired up my gas lamp to a roar of flame. After the smell of burning leg hair a sumptuous dinner was cooked accompanied by much hilarity and a desert of chocolate and nougat. Colette was our main source of entertainment with her unique ski pants (which for the record I quite liked), her comment that she couldn't see the moon (leaving me to wonder what she could have thought I was going on about with my "new moon" statements) and her relief at finding that the hillside really did have fireflies - she thought she was hallucinating. At about 23:30 we settled down for an uncomfortable night under a beautiful sky. I was extremely tired but got little sleep in my uncomfortable spot, so I just lay there staring at the stars and picking insects out of my sleeping bag. Those

and the others lay sleeping down at Disa camp, Colette and Anita sprang into action in the cold morning air while I went in search of Richard who had chosen a sleeping spot somewhere out on the other side of the path. There was no time to cook breakfast, so by 6am after some apples, a small carton of ultramel and a slurp of water we were hiking down amongst a range of spectacular protea and reached Gavin's camp at 7:30 - waking many of them up. We stopped with them, boiled some coffee and ate a quick breakfast. By 8:00 we were saying goodbye to Colette, Gavin and the others and were on our way again. Anita was prepared for the whole boulder-hopping bit and had come armed with strops and socks. Richard and I hadn't realised we were doing the river until we were actually on the road and so had only our boots. I proceeded bare foot to try and keep mine dry for



bugs were just everywhere and for anyone who camps on Happy Hill in future be warned: we had cockroaches in our food, cockroaches in our sleeping bags and cockroaches in our rucksacks. If those guys had been pine trees Dave Acott would have died a happy man. At 5am on the button Colette woke us with the words "Guys, it's light - shouldn't we be hiking?" Never a truer word said. While Gavin

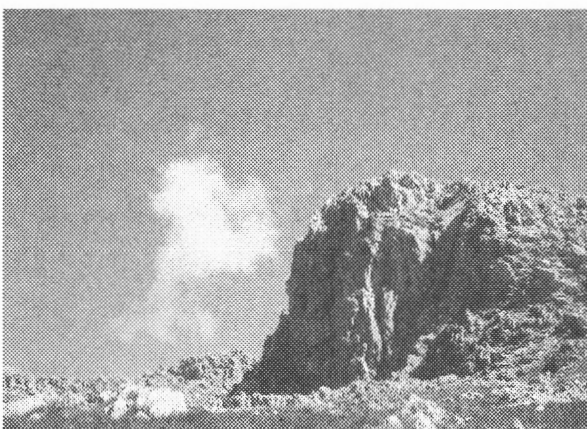
the hike up Adderley, but succeeded in getting them both completely immersed on Philemon's wade. Hooray for noseal - after the swims later I poured out the water and put on dry boots. The river level seemed to be higher than usual and we encountered four wades instead of the usual three, and after Tunnel Swim: the last of our swims for the day, we took our first break. Being inadequately prepared for the swims my



kit and Anita's were drenched, so we spread clothes, sleeping bags and rucksacks out on the rocks to dry. Progress was good all the way to Disappointment Pool - I was back in my boots after the swims as the rocks were too hot for bare feet. After that, it ceased to be fun and just became a mission as we fought our way along hugely overgrown paths and got hacked to pieces by malicious bushes. The blood mixed with sweat and sunburn as the day just got hotter and hotter. Several times we were convinced we saw Adderley street, especially when at one point on a particularly overgrown part of the river I authoritatively said "I know that's the Alder Ring I remember that rock: I lay on it to wait for pudding to set." The sun had apparently poached my brains. Eventually, at around 3pm, we really did reach Adderley Street and took our first decent break since breakfast. All too soon though, it was time to head upwards.

We zigzagged up Adderley while Richard regaled us with stories of path building, and Anita and I just plodded thinking "Freshers' pool, Freshers' pool, Freshers' pool" like a mantra in our heads. I can't remember who in our party said it, but I remember them saying: "I believe the mountain has a spirit, and today she's malicious". It felt that way as we plodded up towards Big and Little Ben, Anita leading the way, once sinking almost ankle deep in mud and Richard, patiently tolerating our pauses in the sweet relieving shade of the bigger rocks. Just over an hour from the start of Adderley we were at the Fresher's pool. It was unusual to be there with just three people. As Anita said, you kept expecting to see sixty girls in bikinis appear out of the bushes. Never mind, I don't know about Richard but I was too worn out to deal with sixty

girls in bikinis. The evening was just as hot as we headed up the ridge and down to Kweperfontein past some browsing klipspringer. Now as the end approached, the pace was sharp and our spirits restored. We were ready for another epic. We had a large detour around the dam as the water had well over-flowed the path, the level being up to the top of the dam wall. After a quick dip we walked down the road to my car talking about how amazing it was that just two days ago we were writing exams and how in one day we had hiked about 10km and over 12 hours and more than



half of the Witels. It was after eleven when I got to bed and despite the warm glow of achievement the next day I could still feel the effects of the heat and dehydration: a beating headache, happy light-headedness and a slow rocking motion the world seemed to have. I wouldn't rush back to do the trip again, but it proved at least three things:

1. People can and now do join the Witels late.
2. Girls can and do hold their own amongst the club's guys.
3. People should not answer apparently friendly and innocuous phone calls during exam time.



### **Buffelshoek or Bust**

Who: Jacek, Chris, Sam, Jocelyn, Danny

When: 23-26 November 2001

By: Danny MacPhee

For those keeping score, don't bother reading to the end--the answer is bust. But for those who care, the trip was a delightful failure with plenty of lesser peaks, gorgeous weather, and good times had by all.

Things got off to an exciting start with an impromptu off-road excursion in the dirt at the N2-N1 interchange. With the aid of some frantic arm-waving from the lead vehicle, the errant Golf regained its bearings and we all made it to Vredehoek without further detour (aside from the scenic Huguenot Tunnel bypass). We started the ascent to Hoare Hut as the sun began to set, completing the second half of the climb in the dark. After a tasty dinner of pasta with two sauces courtesy of Jacek and Chris we all hit the sack to rest up before the walk to the Perry Refuge shelter in the morning.

Even though the hike to Perry appears on the map to be a fairly simple contour around the Witels valley, it proved to be a solid day's undertaking, due to an elusive path, loose stones with every step, and, most significantly, the

"two gorges from hell." Jacek didn't waste any time being the first to demonstrate how not to fall two meters as we descended the steep, rocky slope of the first gorge. He followed it up a few moments later with a much less spectacular stumble, clearly setting the standard for the rest of us to follow. We spent Saturday night at the Perry hut just below the nek between Brodie and Sentinel peaks. Early in the evening the wind picked up and clouds began to roll over the ridgeline giving us a hint of what was in store. Jacek, the undisputed alpha male, established his harem inside the aluminum hut wedging himself between the two ladies and relegated the other two guys to sleeping outside.



Foolishly embracing my banishment, I looked up at the brilliant half-crescent moon that guided our walk the night before and commented, "sleeping outside is great as long as the moon stays out." No sooner had I crawled into my sleeping bag than the moon disappeared in the incoming mist not to be seen again. And with the moon went Buffelshoek. When 5am rolled around, the threatened alarm was silent, and visibility was so poor that those sleeping inside couldn't see those sleeping outside. So, without a word or glance exchanged, we all decided to roll over and go back to sleep, putting off the ascent of Buffelshoek for another, more

complaint day.

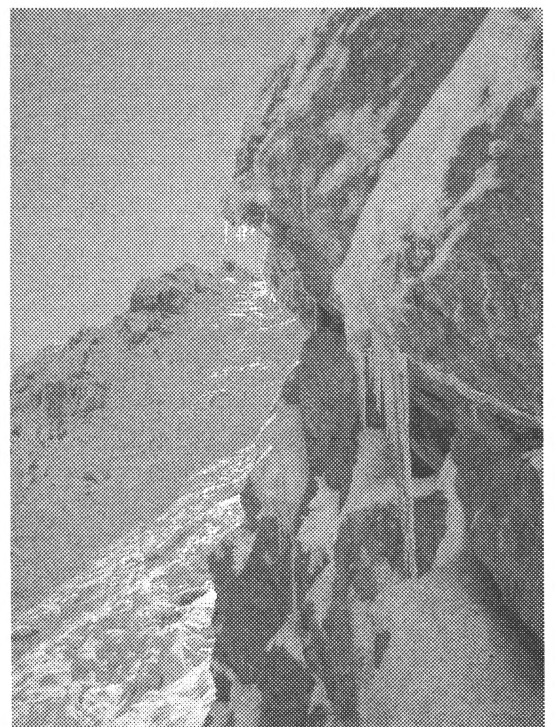
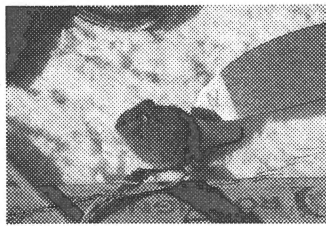
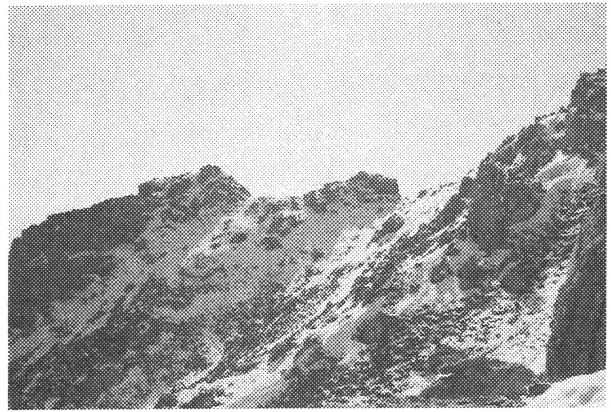
After enjoying a few extra hours of sleep and a hot breakfast, we refused to let the day go to waste. In various combinations and configurations, we climbed Brodie, Sentinel and Windsor peaks throughout the morning and gradually made our way back to the much more spacious and welcoming Hoare Hut, where

some also bagged Waaihoek. There were sightings of klipspringer, snakes, and plenty of protea still in bloom. Monday morning we made our descent as clouds were pouring over Point High, bringing to a close a very satisfying if not completely successful weekend trip to the Hex River Mountains.

## SNOW IN AFRICA !!!







# Dictionary of MSC Terms

Compiled by Kevin Iles

**10%:** The number of members a leader is permitted to lose on any given trip.

**2 ½:** The number of cars returning at the end of a trip in the same condition as they left in.

**35kg:** Gavin's minimum pack weight.

**5.6:** The distance from any one point to any other. As in "how much further is it Adri?" "5.6"

**A\*hole: (n)** Sometimes a vulgar derogatory name for someone, but most often a card game involving equal quantities of vindictiveness, ego and skill.

**Baronee: (n)** A popular chocolate bar. As in "I like all chocolates, bar one."

**Bat: (n)** Mouse on wings. **(v)** To have your amorous advances rejected, as in "she gave him bat". **(adj)** Mad, as in "she gave him bat, she must be bats!"

**Berg: (n)** Although the word means mountain, it refers to only one mountain, the Drakensberg.

**Bergies: (n)** Homeless down-and outers who live in mountains.

**Big Ben: (n)** While Ben may maintain that this is a reference to his burly manliness it is actually a reference to a rock on Waaihoek. The other rock is Little Ben. The correct term for Ben is just 'Ben'.



**Bivvy: (n)** To camp out, generally in uncomfortable, cold and miserable conditions.

**Boegoe: (n)** Strong smelling herb placed in tea or smoked. Not to be confused with moegoe.

**Breakfast: (n)** What you should always have before a hike. Also eaten before sunrise on mountaintops and involving large skottelbraais, 15kg of muffins, 18 dozen eggs and three pigs (for bacon).

**Cape Storm: (n)** In normal parlance the name of those vicious cold fronts that blow in off the ocean, but also the designer gear that Nic wears to climb mountains.

**Car shuffle: (v)** A technique whereby the leader of a trip attempts to spread as many broken down cars as possible over as large a

stretch of country as they can manage.

**Chill: (v)** Relax, as in "just chill already, keep your pants on". Also a weather condition leading to illness, as in windchill factor.

**Circular Definition: (n)** See definition, circular

**Climber's friend: (n)** Not to be confused with 'friend'. This is a scrubby plant with prickly thorns that hurts like first on Monday.

**Conservation: (n)** A carefully, scientifically conducted exercise whereby trained people attempt to massacre as many pine trees as possible.

**Crap: (acr.)** Not the vulgar word used to describe coarse material, but a food substance



comprising chocolates, raisins and peanuts.

**Definition, Circular: (n)** See circular definition

**Digs: (n)** Small 3 or 4 person apartment shared by 15 students; **(v)** likes or smaaks, as in "he digs her"; also to search for treasure.

**Down: (n)** Not the direction we generally hike in. Normally used in the context of sleeping bag contents.

**Dragonfly: (n)** A brand of hiking stove. Not to be confused with a horsefly or a tsetse fly.

**Early: (n)** Less than an hour late.

**Fresher: (n)** A new person to the club, also a new spading opportunity.

**Friend: (n)** Thing you stake your life on when climbing difficult routes. Also a person you enjoy being with.

**Fynbos: (n)** Small scratchy plants that are the real reason why guys have leg hair.

**Garmét: (n)** Sommer game. Always made either far too dilute or very strong.

**Gavin: (n)** Barely-contained chaos. Also a useful device for getting inordinately large quantities of equipment up a mountain.

**General, the: (n)** A used to be pine tree on Waaihoek that has been long since felled. A new general is, however, mounting a final stand above the Witels.

**Groupie: (n)** An affectionate term for a group photograph where people are forced to huddle as close together and smile as artificially as if they were engaged in the other popular meaning of groupie.

**Hack: (n)** To rip out a pine tree by the roots and send it hurtling down a cliff to smash into tiny bits of bark on the waiting rocks below. **(v)** Also the comparatively dull technique of breaking into computers.

**Hex: (n)** A range of mountains that are home to Waaihoek and Zuurberg. Also a spell by a wicked person. Not to be confused with sex.

**Hi: (n)** A significant feature on any Hoare Hut ascent. A typical conversation would go: "Hi!" Reply "Hi! At last, Point Hi." "Ja, it's quite high."

**Hoare: (n)** A popular choice amongst many members where most people find their home from home and just keep coming back. Not to

be confused with the patrons on main road.



**Hut slut: (n)** The chief cook and bottle washer on any hut trip. Also

known as a pot fairy.

**Info centre: (n)** The centre of the Upper Campus universe for MSC members. Also a place where one spends an hour waiting for other party members to arrive,

**Karrimor: (n)** Something Gavin can always do. Also a brand of rucksack.

**Kelvin: (n)** S.I. unit of temperature, i.e. absolute temperature where  $0K = -273C$ . Alternatively the name of the old Hikes Convenor, a.k.a., the pot fairy.

**Kestrel: (n)** The woefully worn thin and leaky club tents.

**Kili: (n)** A dirty great hunk of adventure very popular amongst MSC members. Also the club's skiing convenor.

**Log: (n)** The remains of a pine tree. Also a record of events as in a summit log or a logbook.

**Long-standing Relationship: (n)** One that lasts for four days of a five day trip.

**Lost:** meaning unknown.

**Mailing list: (n)** Also called the black-mailing list. Used for announcing MSC events and changes in sexual preference. Also a trick used by those on the O-week stall to get the email addresses of pretty girls.

**Meet: (n)** A gathering of people eager to go on a trip together.

**MSC Members: (n) pl** See bergies

**MSC: (acr.)** Stands for Mountain and Ski Club and not Male Stud Club as some like to think.

**NCR: (acr.)** North Council Room, and not "No Clothing Required" as some like to think.

**Oat so Queasy: (n)** Breakfast on the trail.

**Party: (n)** A group of people on a meet. Also any gathering involving alcohol.

**Petzl: (n)** A popular headlamp. Also affectionately known as a "big P" as in "he has a big P".

**Pew, the: (n)** The toilet with the best view ever.

**Pine tree: (n)** The enemy. A small plant that attempts to grow into a tree. Large specimens seldom seen more than once.

**Pocket Rocket: (n)** A small but powerful instrument that can raise the temperature of a situation very rapidly. As in "I can get you my pocket rocket if you like."

**Pulpy vegetable matter: (n)** An efficient vehicle alarm system used to prevent thefts at Waaihoek. Bananas have been found to produce the best results.

**Punctual: (n)** Arriving within 1 hour of the stated time.

**Rastus: (n)** The name given to rodent that lives in Hoare Hut and that has the ability to change from an innocuous field mouse into a large rucksack eating rat. Has been killed at least three times.

**Ratatouille: (n)** An unpronounceable Italian food that comes in tins and is an essential ingredient in every good MSC meal.

**Ski credit: (n)** The closest the skiing convenor gets to ever handling real money. These points entitle people to ski in winter. They may be saved or sold.

**Skippie: (n)** The obligatory bottle of peanut butter on any MSC trip. It is expected to say "Yippy" when the bottle is unpacked.

**Smash: (n)** Not a car accident term. Rather the artificial green-looking dehydrated potato slop some people try and pass off as food.

**Snow: (n)** White powdery stuff that is always in



high demand and often results in feelings of extreme elation or bodily injury. Also a yuppie drug.

**Spade: (n)** Implement for digging holes never seen on MSC trips. **(v)** To try and hold a woman's interest long enough to sleep with her, as in he spent the whole trip spading her."

**Stinging Nettle: (n)** A plant whose reputation far exceeds its frequency on the mountain.

**Stud muffin: (n)** Mike's self-appointed title.

**Stuff: (n/v)** All purpose generic term used to describe one's things or belongings; the action of placing your sleeping bag into its cover; the feeling of being full after a good meal; and a vicious threat, as in "I'm going to stuff you up."

**Sugar: (n)** The devil personified if you're Mattieu.

**Sundowners: (n)** An evening event involving using a mountain and the sunset as an excuse for drinking as much as possible and then stumbling down in the dark clutching at people in the dark who you can't quite identify.

**Tahr: (n)** A hardy little mountain goat from the Himalayas that lives on Table Mountain, breeds like a rabbit, and avoids the Parks Board guns.

**Three provita challenge: (n)** A bizarre and

life-threatening contest between slightly twisted MSC members involving food, stopwatches and hilarity.

**Transkei mud: (n)** A delicious pudding involving large portions chocolate instant pudding and peppermint crisp.

**Trip: (n)** A pleasureable experience during which you see amazing visions, sweat a lot and do stupid things.

**UCT: (acr.)** A university some MSC members attend in moments between climbing mountains.

**Waaihoek: (n)** Literally translated means "windy corner". Etymology unclear but may be related to phenomena experienced at Hoare Hut after Dave has consumed a meal of beans and eggs.

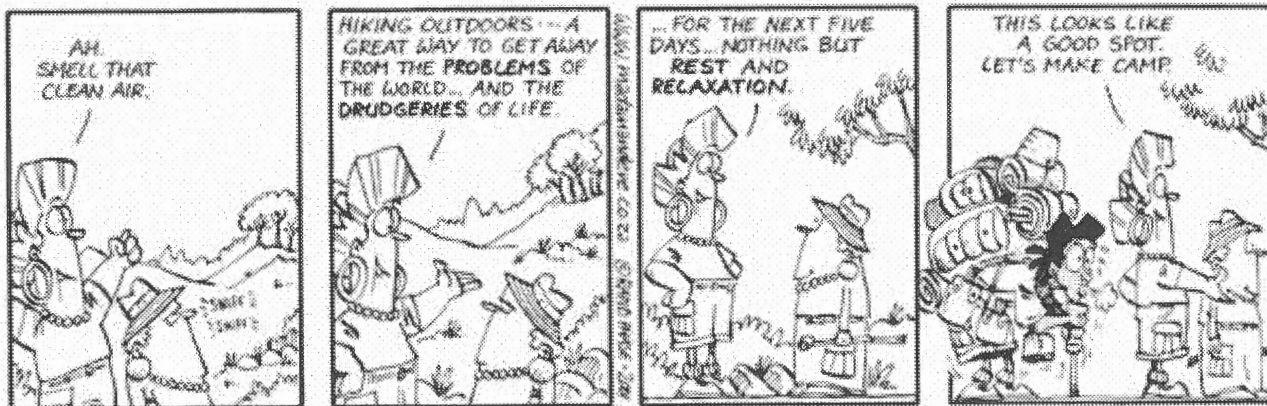
**Waterbottle: (n)** A device for carrying alcohol on trips.

**Witels: (n)** Name of a tree never seen in the kloof of the same name. Also a popular MSC trip where guys get to enjoy girls in bikinis for a full five days.



**Wol: (n)** Wool to Afrikaans people everywhere. Alternatively the name of the old Zuurberg Convenor.

**Zuurberg: (n)** Literally translated means sour mountain.



## ROOF OF THE PENINSULA

By: Ruth of the Peninsula

Whoever came up with the thought of hiking from UCT to the Brass Bell in Kalk Bay - and that is *not* via the M3, has to have a few essential screws loose (sorry Carel, this judgement is merely based on the choice of your *route sub-optimale*...). From Rhodes Mem, one proceeds along and up Newlands Ravine, to Ledges and up to MacLear's Beacon. Our meander along Carel's ledge, down a jeep track in Cecelia Forest and to Constantia Nek was ended by a brief pause for lunch. Yet it was not short enough for Mattieu to provide the entertainment of the day. Just as a rather hefty estate agent placed his signs on the island, Nani went and lifted them up and carried it right past the *dude's* car. Dude was not impressed, and approached our group asking if we were willing to disclose which "school" we were from (to which our brave leader Wollie gave an emphatic NO!) Not without an attempt to cause more trouble, Nani returned the signs to their rightful place, and the group and trundled on.

The uphill after lunch is a bad time for that Inter-Varsity hangover to hit. It is also here, in this unfamiliar territory, that I forget the names of mountains and valleys crossed. The road that seemed to carry on forever eventually ended at Oukaapse Weg, where four of the ten were obliged to make alternative arrangements to get home - it was almost inevitable that we were going to miss the last train back from Kalk Bay. Six *bittereinders* were left to cross Silvermine and enter Kalk Bay from the mountainside. Abandoned by my female acquaintances, I became very aware of the fact that now I would

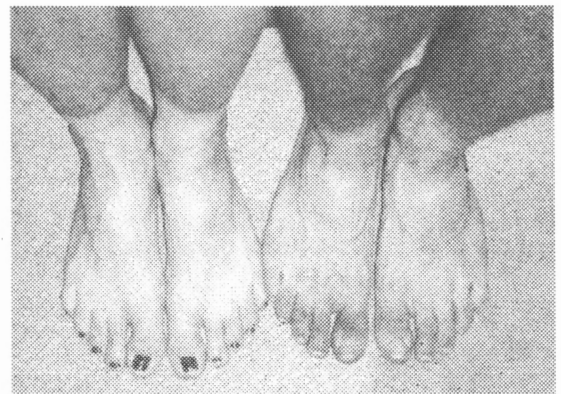
have to walk twice as fast to keep up. But walking wouldn't get us to our final destination on time. If we were serious about our free lift home, we would have to run. And run we did. The last two up-hills hung above us as Studmuffie and Jono showed us the way. By now we had all pretty much settled into trance mode, and as the last long downhill approached, we were nothing more than a group of zombies!

17:45, a half an hour before the last train left, we



arrived at the Brass Bell, just in time to have the long awaited pint. But Dave Acott turned out to be the only one strong enough to stomach the 'long-awaited' pint. The rest of us chickened out with Cokes and fruit juices. Two rows on the train to Rondebosch were filled with blank stares and dirty feet: an introduction to the virtual inactivity for the rest of the day.

So...are you keen for the challenge? If so, I have only one thing to say to you: this is not a hike to be done if you enjoy looking at the flowers. You do it in order to say "Been there...done that..." and if you ever catch me doing *that* again, Valkies will be me next destination!



## MONT ROCHELLE

By: Samantha Becker

### Work avoidance:

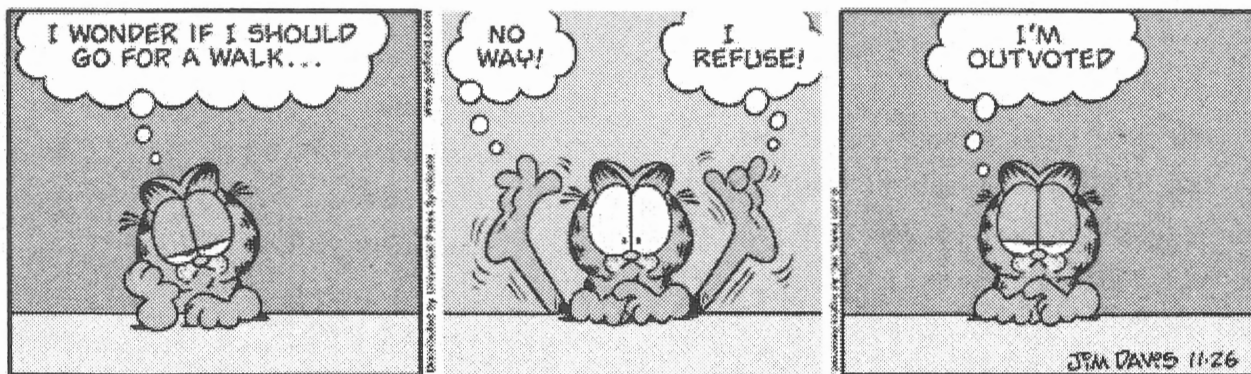
This was the first hiking trip I had done in over month. Physically, I was feeling very unfit, so I really wanted to stay at home, but decided that *anything* would be better than studying. We all met at the MSC shuttle central: Info centre at 9am, where it was discovered that two of the VIP's (people bringing cars) were missing. Caroline's Dad saved the leader from being lynched by angry, impatient mob by kindly donating a car. Finally, we were on our way with Sonder at the speed record of 60Km/hr. He had car problems - but I think the only problem was the driver!

You can tell when you've reached Franschoek. Its street names and all useful signage are in French. I think this is due to local snobbery, not French presence. There was a fiery debate whether or not to sneak into the nature reserve without permits, but in the end, we bought them. After doing 40km/h behind numerous plaas voertuie on our journey up the Franschoek pass, very beautiful views came to light. I felt tremendous relief for not having to start walking right from the bottom.

### Tourism is us:

This hike proved to have International appeal: Sonder, our Dutchman, 4 noisy Americans and our Polish leader all enjoyed the walk up to the view site at Mont Rochelle. The Plateau we walked up and along provided gentle walking and yielded an amazing vista of Simonsberg. After a yummy lunch break, we stomped up to Perdekop: a small nipple, which, no matter how much you try to use your imagination, does not look like a horse's head. This mountain lies in front of Kallerkop (re-named, due to 'badly printed map' :) - all part of the Franschhoek Mountain Range. Walking along, we saw the smallest patch of snow. It was so small it could be likened to a stubborn white stain on a green cloth. I couldn't understand why some people started getting really excited and started shouting: 'Lets play in the snow!' (With our big toes) Our group split up, most of us summiting Perdekop and the rest frolicking in the 1mx1m snow smudge.

The walk up to Perdekop proved to be very easy, and we got to see a lot more of the Franschoek range. Table Mountain could also be seen hunched within a thick wad of smelly smog in the distance. The air where we were was clear and smelt of fynbos after the rains.





Aching, neglected limbs got some rest, and so we left the horse's head. After the Americans engaged in a bout of happy snapping, we all came down to meet the snow freaks, who by now were sick of the "white shit". The afternoon got mellower; the sun and the good food caused tremendous drowsiness in my body and mind. Despite that, I forced myself to stay awake, focus on the path, and also, once in the driving seat, try to maintain alertness.

Driving back to noisy, crowded Cape Town was perhaps the most difficult task I have undertaken. Slowly, each of my passengers fell asleep. Being awake was becoming more and more difficult. Luckily, we all arrived home safely to face a painful week of first on Monday, which always hurts more than any amount of hiking.

### THE 3 PEAK CHALLENGE

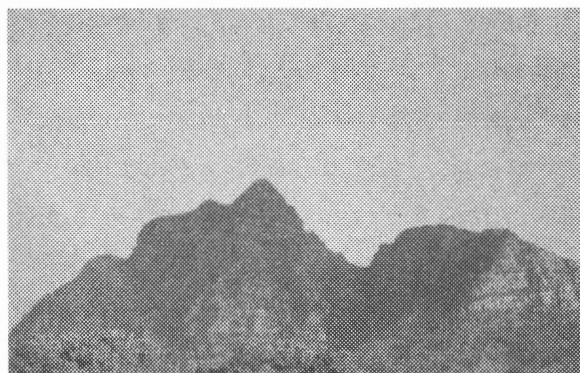
By: Julia Wakeling

The only challenge is against yourself! It was Saturday - the day after Friday night, which often causes the problem of waking up, resulting in some people who managed to sleep through their alarm clocks. So we had a grand total of 17 people at 7:00am that morning. The enthusiastic drivers had shuttled their cars to the bottom of Lion's Head and were rearing to go at 7:15am.

So we started up the first great mountain, which lay ahead of us: Devil's Peak. All was perfect: great weather and great company. Mowbray ridge is definitely the way to go, when it comes to the peak, none of this Newlands ravine crap! There was a time when we were walking

precariously along and a shout came from the front. The leader was telling us where we were and where we should go, when the 'ledge' we were walking on ran out and the only way forward was up some grade 18 climb. So Ben the great leader promptly went to the front, sat down with his legs hanging over the edge and had a mid-morning snack!

We made it successfully to the top but some people selected the more adventurous climbing route, and the others, the longer walking route. After another slightly later than mid-morning snack, we went down to the saddle, and straight up AGAIN! As Ben said: "If you are unfit or have bad ankles and knees then DON'T COME as it will be up, down, up, down, up, down!"

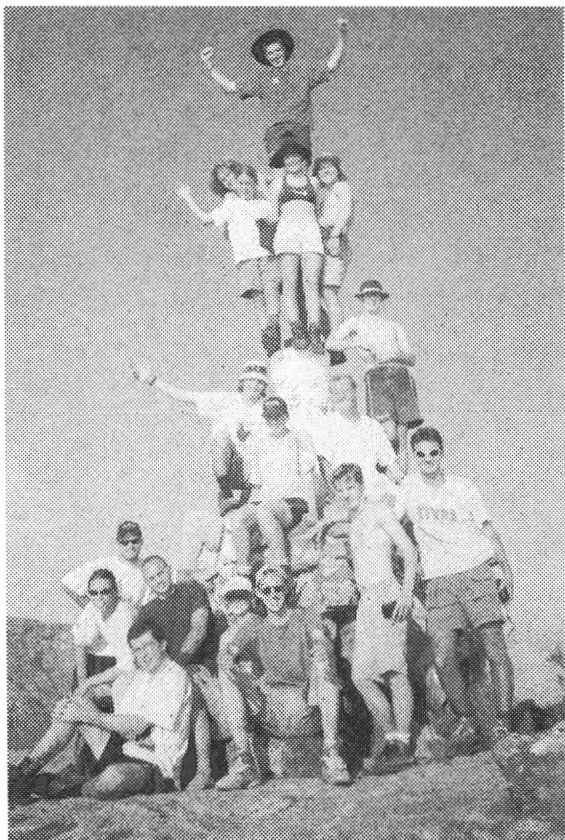


Fairly uneventfully we managed to get to Maclear's Beacon, where we found many raucous cable car travellers (what a sin). So we pushed on and had lunch somewhere near Platteklip Gorge with splendid view of the city and sea. It was decided we were walking too fast and that we should not waste time and spend sunset on Lion's Head, but instead head down to the beach. So we raced down India Venster and went to the beach where we played volleyball all afternoon! Or did we?

Not quite: we weren't going to get away with that now, were we! Indeed, we did get down India Venster pretty swiftly, some faster than

others, but we should not miss out the juicy details of our descent. If you haven't had the pleasure of meeting Richard Milne then you really must. The one thing you must prepare yourself for is that he loves to take his clothes off (I'm not surprised, as his dress sense is rather warped!) Whilst we were 'having a mid-afternoon snack' just under where the cable car passes, Richard decided that we should 'moon' or 'brown-eye' the lazy sods who take the cable car. So as they were coming up, the sight of some very pale derrieres surprised their poor souls. Much amusement had by all but the tourists!

We ascended Lion's Head more slowly than usual as our legs were beginning to get hacked off, and eventually collapsed in a heap at the top. There was no enthusiasm shown for the final photo but in the end it was taken. It all finally ended on the beach with the sun and the set. What a great day!



## ELSIE'S PEAK SUNRISE BREAKFAST

By: Russell Shaw

It was with a great deal of uncertainty that I assured people at the pre-hike meeting on the Friday that there would be clear skies for sunrise the next morning, even though it happened to be raining at the time. Fortunately the weatherman proved to be correct. At precisely six the next morning, I was relieved to see clear skies, and the 21 people who dragged themselves out of their comfy beds to join me on a gentle sunrise climb up Elsie's Peak above Fishoek. Elsie's Peak offers great reward relative to the amount of hiking that has to be done. After thirty-five easygoing minutes we reached the 302m ascent just as the sun was beginning to cast it's appearance from behind the Hex River Mountains. The sun's rays were soon deemed to be extremely necessary due to the gentle but chilly South-Easter blowing across the peak. Windproof jackets and steaming cups of hot tea/coffee soon became sought-after. However, nothing could detract from the beautiful surroundings the Indian in front of us, Atlantic Ocean behind us with the scenic, sleepy Simonstown below to the right and friendly Fishoek down to the left.

Unfortunately we were not graced by the presence of the hikes convenor (no names mentioned!) who was meant to bring up the skottel to cook our breakfast. However, one astute member of our group had perchance brought along a mini-cooking set for boiling water. This idea was soon abandoned in favour of steamy bacon, sausages and boerewors, not to mention onions and mushrooms. Despite the crude nature of the cooking apparatus, the food

tasted as good as ever, as cooking duties were swapped from one unwilling party member to another!

Before climbing down to face the rest of the weekend (or go straight back to bed), some group members decided to test a certain theory pertaining to not being able to crush an egg in the palm of one's fist. Needless to say the proponent of the theory was soon proved wrong and literally ended up with egg on his face!

## CAVING IN MUIZENBERG MOUNTAINS

By: Baz

T'was to be a wonderful hike. A glorious trip through the Muizenberg Mountains, and a little bit of caving. Our fearless leader had it all planned out, especially the chosen nick name: STUD MUFFIN MIKE. Now this nickname was chosen to attract the opposite sex, and for a while it seemed to work: The first two entries on the list were in fact girls.

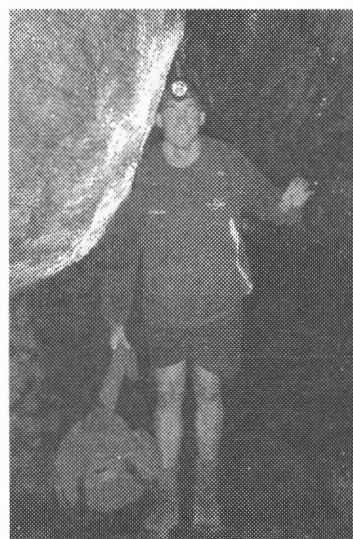
The morning of the hike, and all us guys pitch up really early to discover how many girls the *stud* had attracted. We waited and waited. Suddenly, a car pulls up. Is it a... GIRL no, it's Dave Gwynne-Evans. He came because he thought a myriad of females would attend stud's hike. Boy was he dissapointed.

In order to salvage the situation, our fearless leader gave Dave and I the royal command: "I know two of the girls live in Fuller, Dave, Barry, go forth and get them". So off we ran to Fuller. We eventually found our 'missing persons' but

somehow, Dave's presence scared them off. I think he may have said something along the lines: "C'mon, we will be in a dark cave together". So we had to face the harsh reality that no girls were to come along on our trip. Not only that, but our fearless leader hoped that none of us called him *stud-muffin* during the hike in front of other hikers (The rainbow society this is not!).

So we went off on our hike. The caves were very interesting, especially the parts that were a tad tight (emphasis

on TAD). It was soon made clear that Dave was more interested in botanising than hiking, so was I. So the two of us split up from the group, and I had a few lessons in

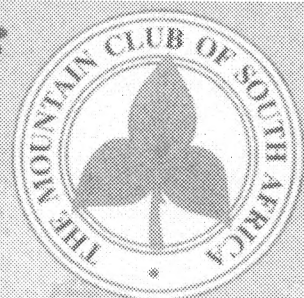


Latin. After we finished our botanising expedition... um, I mean hike; it was off to the cars. At this point, Dave and myself were barraged with acorns, which were being pelted on us (Go, Morgan! - ed.). We answered their assault with one of our own, but unfortunately, we hit nobody.

Moral of our story: if you want girls to come on your hike, you need something more enticing than *stud muffin*. On the other hand, if you want guys to come on your hike, make sure the leader has a nick name along the lines of *sex kitten*, then wait.. *they will come*.



# *The Mountain Club of South Africa*

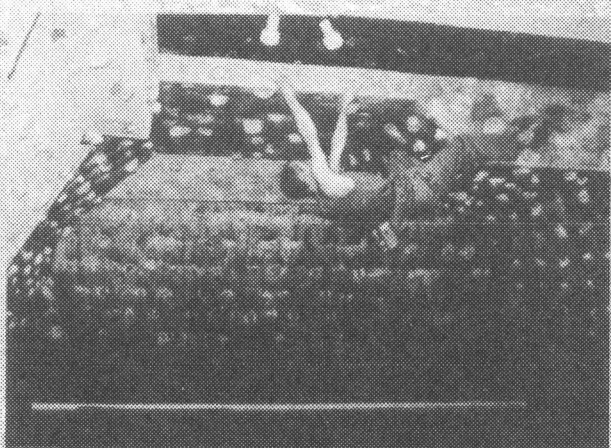


*The club for all climbers and mountaineers*

Whether you enjoy exploring the classic rambles on Table Mountain, pitting your skills against steep, athletic sport routes, or are drawn by the intimidating big walls of our spectacular western Cape mountains, you can only benefit from signing up with South Africa's top mountain club.

The first Tuesday of every month is a vibrant, exciting evening where climbers get together, swap stories, watch slide shows and generally have fun.

We bring international mountaineers to South Africa so that our young climbers can integrate with and learn from these stars.



Upstairs we have a bouldering wall that is open three nights a week and between 10.00 am & 2.00 pm everyday during the week. Shower facilities available.

We help our members to realise their dreams, assisting promising young climbers on international climbing meets, expeditions, and local trips around the country.

**YOUR ACCESS TO THE MOUNTAINS IS OUR CONCERN**

*Come join us now for an exciting future in climbing*

97 Hatfield Street, Cape Town: Tel: 465 3412 Fax: 461 8456  
email: [mcsacc@iafrica.com](mailto:mcsacc@iafrica.com)

## Book Reviews

By: Dave Acott

There are countless books written on mountaineering, many of them owned by the MSC. This is meant to give you a guide through them.

### The Epic of Mount Everest: Sir F Younghusband

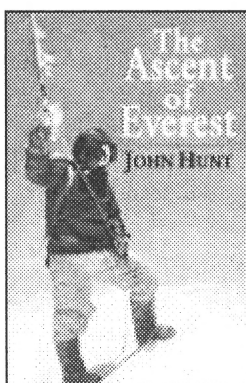
Though written in a somewhat antiquated, colonial style, this book gives invaluable insight into the beginnings of man's fascination, written by the person who initiated this fascination. The book starts with the 1921 reconnaissance of Everest, and ends with an accurate description of Mallory and Irvine's disappearance, leaving the reader to make any conclusions

### Everest 1933: Sir H Rutledge

Nine years after Mallory's disappearance, the British were finally allowed to return to Tibet, and Everest. This account by the 1933 leader is a valuable key to the Everest history, but was written more as an exercise in expedition funding than for reader interest.

### Ascent of Everest: Lord J Hunt

Norgay and Hillary's first steps on Everest are legendary. This book does not live up to the legend: it was written by a military officer (who happened to be the expedition leader), written within a month of returning to Britain (under public pressure), and shows the ill-effects of both. I would have expected an officer to be more familiar with the use of paragraphs. Only for the Everest die-hards.



### Everest South West Face: C Bonington

Chris Bonington is said to write as well as he climbs. The 1972 expedition to Everest South-West Face failed, and this is reflected in the book. I found the diary entries in particular long and cumbersome. However, the book gives a good background on post-1953 Everest

expeditions, and useful insights into the advent of more radical mountaineering in the Himalayas.

With a bit more planning, a bit more preparation, and a bit more luck, the 1972 expedition could have been brilliant. In this book, Bonington's writing once more reflects his climbing.

### Kangshung Face: S Vennables

A fascinating account of a new, bold, alpine line on Everest's nastiest aspect. Included in this is negotiation with unhelpful Chinese authorities, ice-climbing at 6000m, and an unplanned bivouac well above the South Col.

Vennables makes the reader feel part of his magnificent feat every step of the way. This is one of the best mountaineering books since Hertzog's Annapurna

### Into Thin Air: J Krauker

The much-acclaimed book about the disaster on Everest in 1996. The book is well researched, and reads like an extended article in Outside Magazine. Brilliant as an introduction to Everest in general, and 1996 in particular - although some may disagree with Krauker's interpretations of events.



### The Climb: A Boukreev

Anatoli Boukreev was one of Uzbekistan's finest mountaineers. He had climbed seven of the fourteen 8000'ers before accepting a guiding position on Everest in 1996, where he became embroiled in the disaster on May 10, and where his actions saved many lives.

Hurt by criticism in Krauker's Into Thin Air, Boukreev sets out to tell the story of May 10 as he saw it. The story includes the behind-the-scenes squabbling, and Boukreev's heroic efforts during the infamous blizzard. Boukreev's sacrifice of readability for reason ultimately holds the book true to this cause. The book is not part of the mass of trash being published about Everest.

Every step of the way one agrees with Boukreev.



Undoubtedly the most insightful of the Everest 1996 books for those who know the background. Novices should start with *Into Thin Air*.

#### Ascent Dissent: K Verner

Ken Verner was a Sunday Times reporter on the semi-successful South African attempt on Everest in 1996. He covers the expedition accurately for the time that he was in the party, and his journalism skills make the book readable. However, his lack of mountaineering background is obvious.

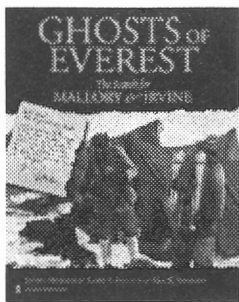
Furthermore, Verner's was expelled from the team by controversial team leader Ian Woodall even before the team left the Base Camp. This makes Verner's account valuable only for the walk-in. Verner's story of the summit attempt is gained from second-hand information, and his interpretation hindered by his background.

#### Free To Decide: I Woodall and C O'Dowd

Ian Woodall and Cathy O'Dowd's ascent of Everest is shrouded in controversy. In *Free To Decide*, they attempt to justify the massive disagreement with MSCA stalwarts February, de Klerk and Hackland; they attempt to justify a premature decision to exclude Deshun Deysel from the team in place of Woodall's father; they attempt to justify withholding valuable equipment from the rescue team during the disaster, and they attempt to justify leaving Bruce Herrod to die on Everest.

The book is more of an appeal to be accepted by South African society than a compelling story of mountaineering.

#### Ghosts of Everest: J Hemmleb, L Johnson, E Simonson



With Everest on everyone's mind after 1996, funding an Everest expedition was no problem particularly when it set out to find the bodies of Mallory and Irvine. To many people's surprise, this expedition found Mallory's body, and

many artifacts but alas, no camera.

Extensive research, both in archives and on the mountain itself, yields a rich harvest of

information about the likelihood of success in 1924. All this is presented in an accessible manner, making the reader feel an expert in the subject. Alas, one's conclusion depends on where and what one believes Noel Odell spotted through the famous break in the clouds. Here, the authors leave the story open-ended. More a detective drama than a mountaineering book but compelling nevertheless.

#### Annapurna: M Hertzog

One of the all-time mountaineering greats, this book covers the first ascent of a peak over 8000m high. This ascent rates as one of the most impressive ever, given that the expedition found it necessary to reconnoiter the entire area before making the ascent - and this was all done within one Himalayan pre-monsoon season.

The book was deservedly a bestseller in its time. The account is as gripping now as it was then; not only is the reader immersed in the pleasure and pain of the expedition, but the individuals concerned are brought to life by characterisations which are scattered throughout the book.

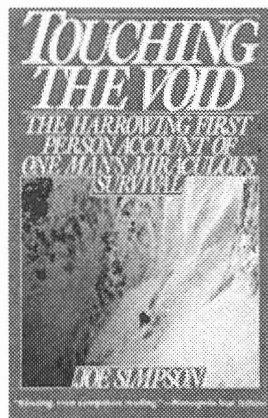
If you are going to read one book on mountaineering, let this be it.

#### Touching the void: J Simpson

A broken leg at 5000m in the Andes. A one-person rescue through deteriorating weather conditions. Finally, to save his own life, Simon Yates cuts the rope from which Joe Simpson is hanging.

How Joe Simpson didn't die in the fall into the crevasse remains a mystery as does his willpower to crawl back to camp. This book gives a glimpse into what Joe thought and did as his life drifted away from him. It is as nerve wrenching as it is gripping. Deserved winner of the Boardman-Tasker prize, and though only five years old already widely regarded as a mountain classic.

The only reason not to read this book now is other pressing work. Be warned: you will





struggle to put it down. Pick it up as soon as you finish Annapurna.

#### Dark Shadows Falling: J Simpson

If anyone is qualified to comment first-hand on dying in the mountains, Joe Simpson is. Joe raises some very interesting debates and criticisms around the degeneration of ethics at high altitude. This is interspersed with an account of his own trip to the Himalayas, in a flowing manner only Joe can master.

Unfortunately the Himalayas story lacks any real focus or inspiration. It appears to be included to pad a fascinating collection of essays into a full-blown book.

Worthwhile reading for Joe's comments on mountain ethics (particularly after reading accounts of Everest 1996). However, Dark Shadows Falling shows just how hard it is to follow up on an instantaneous classic.

Coming soon: Dark Ink Falling a debate about the ethics of the publishing industry, and poor sequels to best sellers. Not by Joe Simpson.

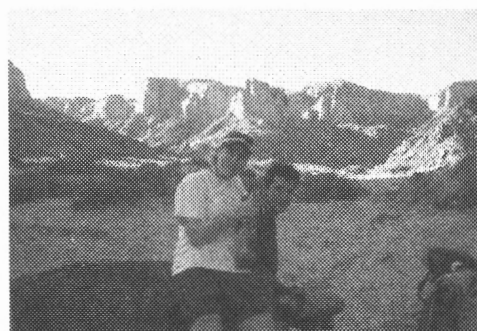
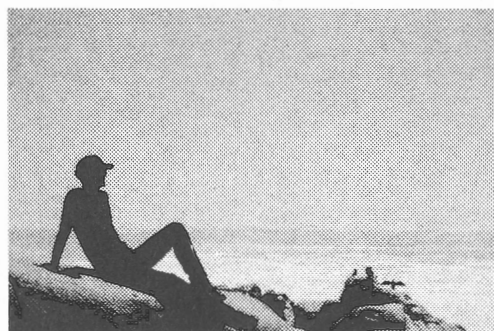
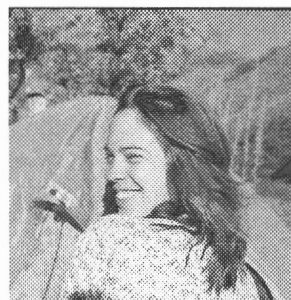
#### Eiger Direct: P Gillman and D Haston

Gillman and Haston compare their book to Annapurna. They are wrong to do so.

In 1969, Haston completed a new line on the North Wall of the Eiger: the most infamous wall in the Alps. Make no mistake, this climb was magnificent, and an impressive feat in its day. However, the book falls far short of this: its third-party narrative is tedious, and it is more journalism (Gillman) than mountaineering (Haston). Read it only for a history of the Eiger Nordwand, for a description of the difficulties on the Eiger Nordwand, and for Haston's occasional but intriguing first-person narrative.

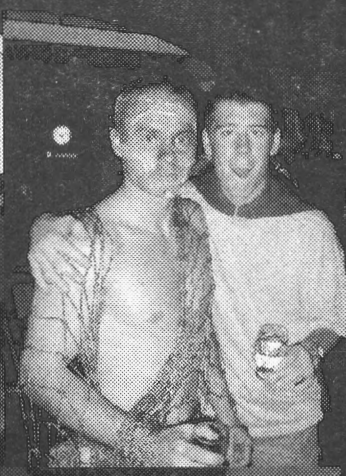
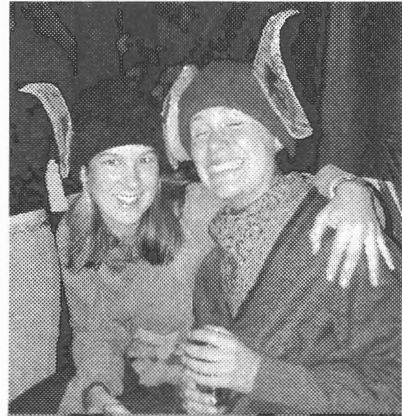
#### My Suggestions:

1. Annapurna
2. Touching the Void
3. Everest Kangshung Face
4. Into Thin Air
5. The Epic of Mount Everest
6. The Climb
7. Ghosts of Everest
8. Dark Shadows Falling
9. Time is better spent climbing than reading any of the other books.

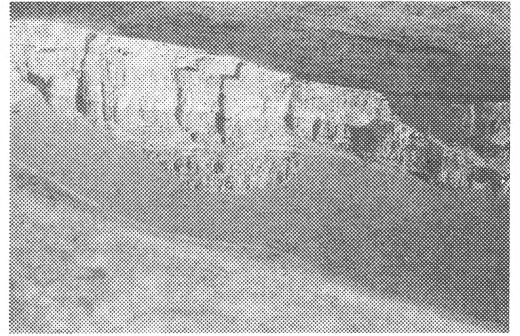
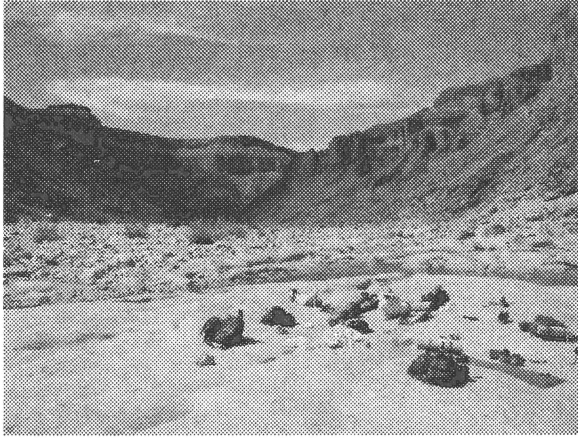




## COCKTAIL PARTY







## Canyon

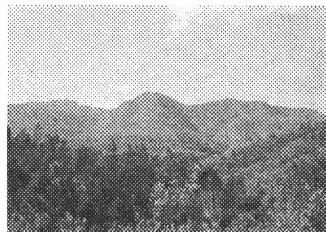
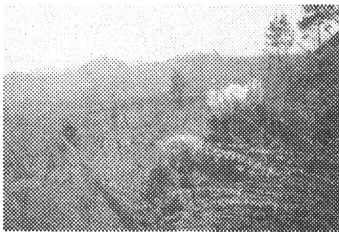
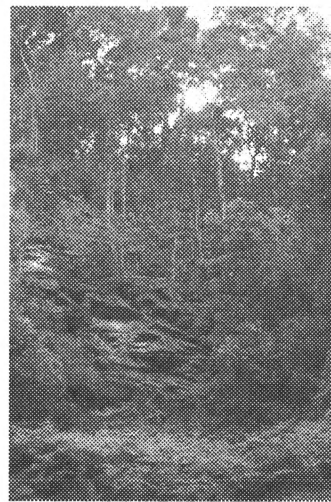
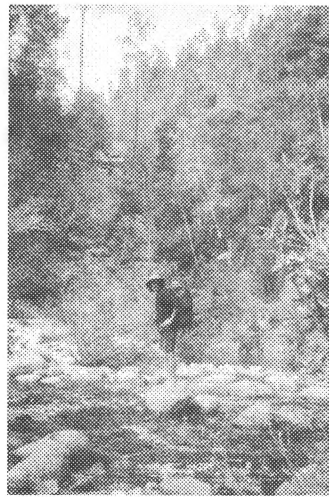
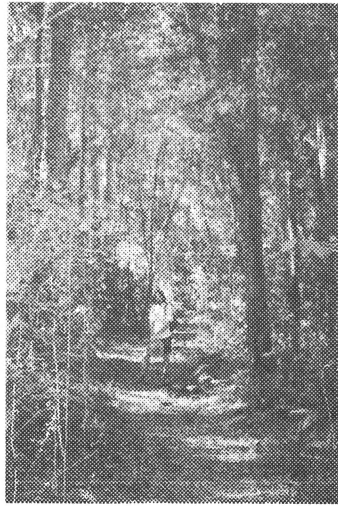
By: Ruth Woudstra

Riverine carvings of  
Aeons ago  
are the sedimentary figments of my  
blushed imagination.

Pinned against a plastic sky  
they rest on the earth's cold shoulder  
where avalanched boulders long for the tingle  
of memory's breathing seaweed.

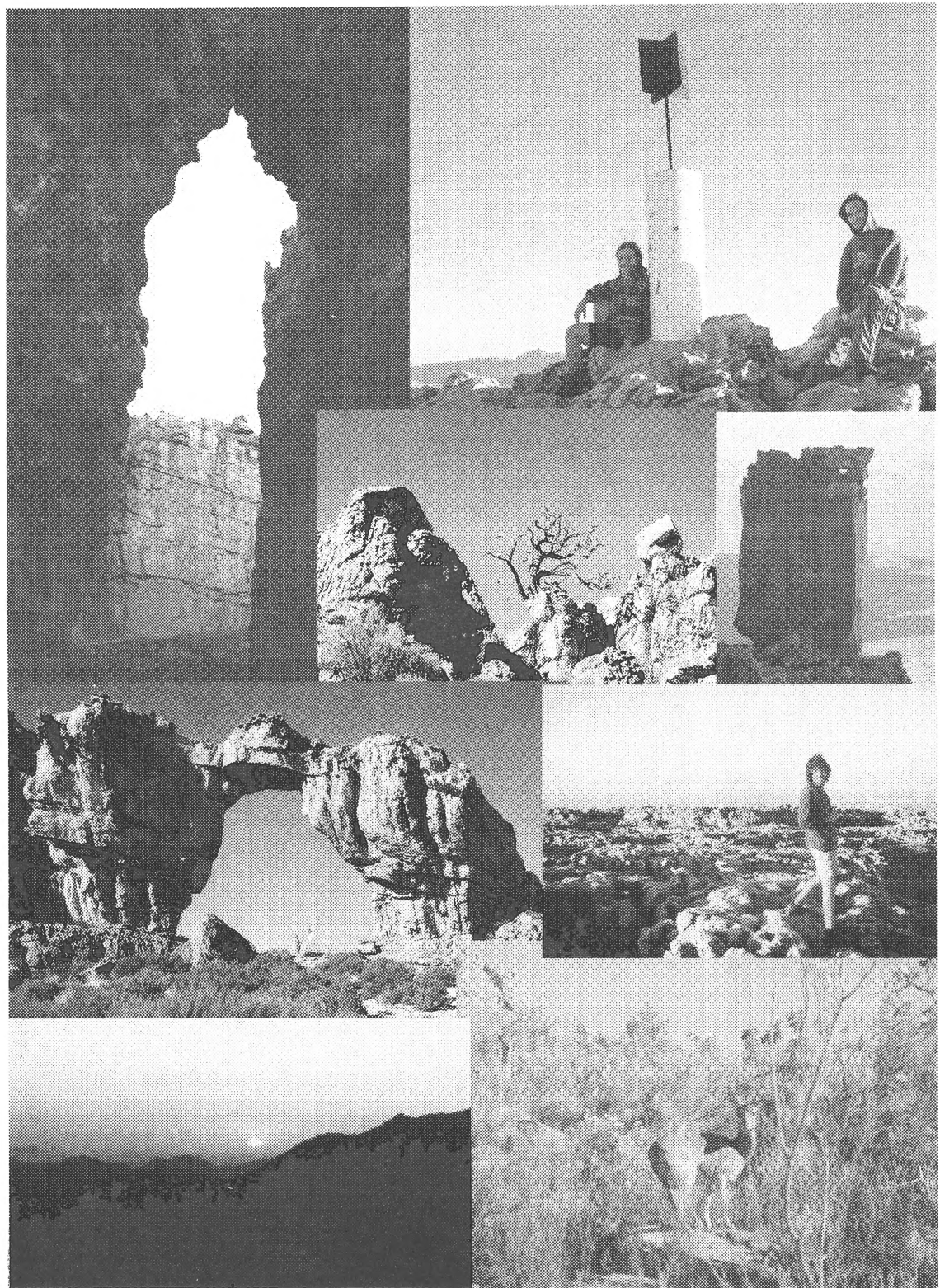






# O U T E N I Q U A T R A I L

# CEDERBERG



## **WHY EVERYBODY VOTED FOR WOLRAAD AS CHAIRMAN FOR 2002**

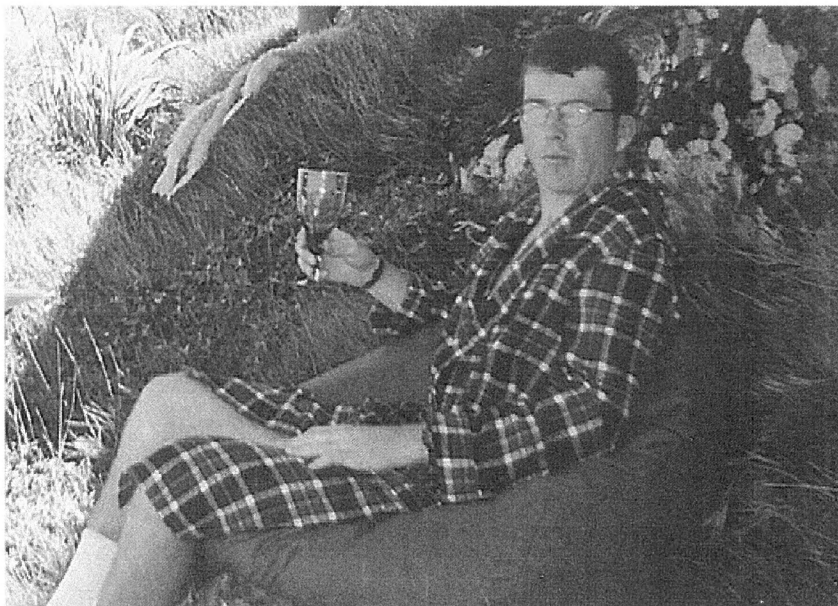
Nomination for Ben Knights as chairperson of the Mountain and Ski Club, presented by Dave Acott at the AGM on 29 August 2001:

Ben Knights is an experienced club member. Ben knows what the club does, and how it functions. Consequently, Ben has many original ideas for improving the running of the club:

- To prevent squandering of club funds, Ben proposes funneling all club funds into Robert Mugabe's land reform process.
- Ben proposes refocusing all club meets - but particularly work-meets - on Rob Meyer's land. In particular, Ben wants to help build extension to Mr Meyer's house.
- Keeping with current political sentiment, Ben wants to rename Adderly Street to De Klerk Street, and accordingly rename the Witels to Mandela River.
- Ben sees great potential for a mass housing project in the vicinity of Pell's Hut
- In an inspired move to improve climbing within the MSC, Ben proposes removing all crash-mats from the climbing wall, and banning the use of ropes.
- To further endear the club to the climbing community, Ben would like to see a subcommittee established to co-ordinate bolt chopping in the Western Cape.

In order to properly oversee the execution of these plans, Ben will be spending the entire committee term working at Mintek in Johannesburg.

**BEN DOESN'T WANT THE JOB. DON'T VOTE FOR HIM.**





All photographs contributed by:

Barry Steyn

Ben Knights

Caleb Lyness

Chris Trauernicht

Danny MacPhee

Geoff du Toit

Gordon Forbes

Jacek Stankiewicz

Maryjka Blaszczyk

Russell Shaw

Ruth Woudstra

Samantha Becker

Sander Agterhuis

Thorsten Schulz

Wolraad Euvrard

